



















God is Love. He who remains in Love  
remains in God, and God  
in him.

—I. Ep. of John, Chap. iv. 16.

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FREDERICK GERHARD.



THE  
Coming Creed of the World.

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Is there not a Faith more  
Sublime and Blissful  
than Christianity?

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A Voice Crying in the Wilderness.

17  
1732<sup>a</sup>  
BY

FREDERICK GERHARD.

Prove all things.

—PAUL.

Truth shall make you free.

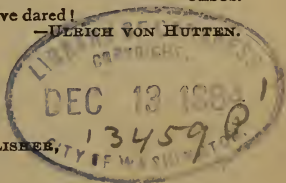
—JESUS.

I have dared!

—ULRICH VON HUTTEN.

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1884.



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TO HIS HIGHLY ESTEEMED FRIEND,

A. H. LAIDLAW, A. M., M. D.,

THIS BOOK IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1884,

BY FREDERICK GERHARD,

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Publishers in foreign countries, who issue translations of this book, will confer a favor upon the author by forwarding to him two copies, directed to Hoboken, New Jersey, U. S. of America.

## CONTENTS.

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Preface, - - - - -	7
Theses, - - - - -	11
Introduction, - - - - -	15
The Bible, - - - - -	21
Christianity, - - - - -	45
Dogmas, - - - - -	45
Sects, - - - - -	72
Rites and Ceremonies, - - - - -	84
Miracles, - - - - -	88
Priests, - - - - -	95
The Missionaries, - - - - -	126
Fanaticism, - - - - -	140
Belief in Evil Spirits and Superstition, - - - - -	181
Has Christianity Made Mankind Better? - - - - -	205
Religion, - - - - -	224
God and the World, - - - - -	247
Jesus, - - - - -	285
Prayer, - - - - -	306
Belief and Science, - - - - -	324
The Opponents of Religion, - - - - -	349
The Spirit of Man and Immortality, - - - - -	376
Pertaining to Morality, - - - - -	417
Conclusion, - - - - -	520



## PREFACE.

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WHOEVER undertakes to say something publicly on so serious and sacred a subject as religion, and is compelled to express views and convictions opposed to those which generally prevail in these days, ought, in my opinion, to enable the reader at once to judge the moral and intellectual attributes of the author, and to ascertain whether these views are really the honest expressions of his convictions, and whether they are dictated by honest conclusions or not. I can think of no better way to reach this end than by giving the reader a concise account of the different phases of mental development through which I have passed.

My parents were Christian people, entirely free from all pietism, and I was brought up simply according to the teachings of the Christian Church. After having been confirmed I lived, like millions of others, as a member of that communion, without ever reflecting on the nature of religion and faith. When I had reached about half-way between thirty and forty years of age an event occurred which was intended to arouse me from my thoughtlessness, to stir me up to reflection, and to lead me into a path which I have followed ever since.

A business friend had introduced to me a youth, sixteen years old, of the name of Eunom Philippi. I have never met, in the long course of my life, a purer, nobler, more modest young man than he. He was soon thoroughly at home in my house, and was treated like one of my children. We had many and long conversations, and on one

occasion the subject of religion and church came under discussion. When I expressed the views of Christianity, in which I had been educated, and which I had followed hitherto, he asked me with that charming modesty which was peculiarly his own : “ But, dear Mr. Gerhard, is there not perhaps a faith more sublime and blissful than Christianity ? ” I do not remember what reply I made to this, but I know that at that moment a veil was drawn from my eyes, and I saw before me, as it were, a light shining through the dark night around me. From that moment I began to *reflect* upon the serious problems of life. For more than forty years—I am now in my eightieth year—I have seriously considered the subject ; I have gone through nearly the entire literature relating to it, expressing almost every opinion. From week to week, from day to day, the scales have fallen more and more from my eyes, and I have arrived at the conclusion that *true* religion is nothing more than *the belief in one Supreme Being, and the love for our fellow-men*. Gradually the dogmatic clouds and mists which surrounded the sublime idea of the Eternal God cleared up and disappeared. It has beamed upon me in all purity an eternal light on my life’s path, which, in bright and dark hours, has never left me for a moment. To this day this conviction has preserved in me, with the serious thoughts of matured manhood, the cheerful disposition of youth. It has made my life a happy and contented one, it has enhanced every joy and pleasure, and in the hours of grief, which is the heirloom of all mortals, it has brought me the fulness of comfort and peace. I have deposited the result of my many years’ reflections in the following pages. My work is not directed against the sublime doctrine of Jesus, not against the gospel of love,

but against human dogmatism and priestcraft by which it has been corrupted.

Much of similar intent as mine has been said and written before, but the writers and orators did not think it advisable to speak the whole truth and to draw a distinct parallel between Christianity and Religion. While some rejected the good with the bad, by attempting to destroy religion itself, others made use of weapons which must be considered as unworthy and sacrilegious in a contest about the highest problems of life,—namely, satire, scorn, and scoffing. We may, indeed we ought to, oppose publicly and without reserve that which we consider an error; but it should only be done in a manner which cannot hurt the feeling of those who think differently. I hope the reader of the following page will be convinced that, whatever have been my feelings, I have been guided by that sentiment.

And now, dear reader, I will repeat once more the words of the Apostle Paul which I have written on the title page: "Prove all things;" and the words of Jesus: "Truth shall make you free." Although I myself know that what I have said is living, and will re-echo in the hearts of hundreds of thousands, I do not disguise to myself the fact that it will arouse many opponents, particularly from three different directions. In the first place, from those who believe blindly, who will not see with their eyes nor hear with their ears, who think it a sin merely to reflect upon religious questions; then there are the Pharisees, who say: "I thank thee that I am not like one of those," and who teach what they do not believe; and, lastly, the 'atheists, who would drag the Eternal God from his throne in the heart of mankind.

Before all these adversaries I cast down with courage and confidence the words of Ulrich von Hutten: "I have dared!"

Now, dear, reader, I stand before you with open visor and open heart. Meet me also with an open heart and the honest desire of examining seriously and faithfully what I have written.

FREDERICK GERHARD.

HOBOKEN, N. J., Sept. 1, 1884.



## THESES.

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THERE is only one Supreme Being, who rules the world, and to whom everything owes its origin. This Supreme Being we call God.

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Only to that one Supreme Being we owe adoration and divine veneration. Adoration and divine veneration of one born of woman, or of any object outside of the Supreme Being, is idolatry.

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There is only one religion,—namely, that more or less distinct feeling of dependence upon a Supreme Being, which is common to all men; and the sense of duty and obedience to the will of God, which grows from this and makes itself heard within us.

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Religion is not a form. It does not consist in the belief or in the dogmas of any one church, or any observance of certain rites and priestly actions, but only in the love of God, in the suppression of all selfishness, and in active love of our fellow-creatures.

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Piety does not consist in frequent attendance at church, in thoughtless prayer, in folding of hands and casting down of eyes—not in outward ceremonies and in contempt of the joys of life; but in cheerful

looking up to God, in grateful enjoyment of all gifts which rejoice, and which God has bestowed upon us.

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Love of our fellow-men, no matter of what race, nationality or creed, is, next to our love of God, our most sacred duty. Everything, without exception, that does not correspond with it, or is opposed to it, is deserving of rejection.

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God does not require of us that we should be Christians, or Israelites, or Mohammedans, or that we should belong to any other sect, but that we should be *good and faithful men*. If we honestly strive after this aim and reach it, we have fulfilled the object of our life. It is the highest aim we can reach; all else is futile.

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Two powerful influences regulate men's actions,—the submission to the will of the Supreme Being, and the predomination of our own will,—*i. e.*, selfishness. The first produces love and peace, and the last heartlessness and disorder.

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There are no miracles, there never have been miracles, and there never can be miracles. Everything that occurs in the universe is produced according to eternal, unchangeable laws. The belief in miracles is the origin of superstition.

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There is nothing supernatural, though there are things that are supersensible,—namely, natural events

which appear to our senses as accomplished facts, but the origin and mutual connection of which we cannot comprehend nor conceive with our imperfect human senses.

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Reason is the highest gift which God has given to men, and we are bound to use it. We must not believe blindly, but must meditate seriously upon our relations to God and upon our duties. Reason leads to the knowledge of truth.

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Religion and science are not opposed to each other. They are the founders of the welfare of mankind and fellow-workers. Both pursue the same task,—to enlighten men, to make them better and happier.

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The Bible, which Christianity calls the word of God, is, like every other book, the work of man, written by men who, like others, were subject to errors, and who, moreover, lived in an age which, in culture and knowledge, stands far behind that in which we live. The Bible, besides much that is good and beautiful, contains many errors, much that is incomprehensible, that is opposed to reason, that has no relation to religion; much that is unholy, and for which the name, The Word of God, is altogether unsuited.

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There is no other revelation than that which God has given us in nature, in the whole universe and in our own conscience.

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The human spirit is immortal. Neither reward nor punishment await us after death, but a further development to a higher spiritual life, until our spirit has reached perfection and has joined the Great Spirit of the World, and has become one with it.

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Toleration is the outgrowth of spiritual pride. Whoever boasts of tolerating another of different belief, arrogates the right that he ought not to tolerate him, and proudly tries to elevate himself above his fellow-men. Instead of being tolerant, we should recognize full equality with us of everybody believing differently, such as we justly claim for ourselves. Not toleration, but recognition of equality of all, is the maxim of our time and of humanity.

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Liberty in public and private life cannot exist without complete justice. Liberty is not the right to do everything we wish to do, but only the right to do all which does not interfere with the rights of others.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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A FIELD of thought which is neglected by a vast majority of men is that relating to religion. Yet it is a subject which is open to the most simple-minded, which has no disturbing influence, which, on the contrary, enlightens our innermost soul, casting its bright beams on all our thoughts and actions, prevents us from entering the wrong path, showing us always the right way ; bringing peace to our hearts amidst all the storms and changes of life. The causes of this neglect are of different natures. Many consider that religion interferes with the pleasures of life, and turn away from it for that reason. Others think they do enough if they attend church and follow the commands and ceremonies of the communion to which they belong. Others consider themselves advanced thinkers, and imagine that religion is only intended for less enlightened people than themselves. Others, again, think that particular doctrine, which they call their religion, is perfection, and consider every one who thinks differently either a heretic or an unbeliever. There are some who live as if in a dream in that particular sect in which they have been brought up, while others think it wrong, even a sin, to scrutinize the doctrines of the Church, and consider themselves in duty bound to believe everything which the priest commands them to believe. Finally, there are those who have begun to think ; but when doubts arose, they thought it the best way to get over the difficulty by abandoning all thought of religion as an unnecessary incumbrance, although they lost thereby the guiding star of their lives.

Thus it happens that indifference to religion is spreading more and more every year, bringing as natural consequences in its train unhappy marriages, degenerated children, immorality, drunkenness and gambling ; dissipation, dishonesty, fraud and corruption ; theft, murder, suicide and many other crimes growing and increasing in a fearful ratio.

How many people are there not who, day after day, devote their whole thought to their business, to the accumulation of wealth, to the manner of dressing, beautifying and amusing themselves ; but they take no time to think of what is of the highest importance,—their relation to God, the condition of their soul. They are indifferent as regards this most vital question, which enters into every phase of their existence. They go to church from time to time, observe its rites and ceremonies, and think that thereby they are doing justice to what they call their religious duties, while these ceremonies and mere church attendance are not nearer to true religion than our earth is to the solar globe, from which alone it receives light and life.

For many years we have heard from Christian pulpits, and have read in Christian publications, about the steady decrease of attendance at church. But that is the fault of Christianity alone, because, instead of the love of God and our fellow-men, it preaches dogmas which are opposed to reason and to the spirit of our times. The Christian Church does not regard as a leading principal the sublime doctrine of Jesus,—“ Love ye one another,”—but it lays more weight on that dogma invented by man, that Jesus, or rather Christ, as the Christian Church calls him, is the son of God,—indeed, is God himself. However great

may be our veneration of the sublime man Jesus, it is against all human reason to worship him as God, and to place him even above the Supreme Being. Let him who doubts that this is done go into a Christian church and see, when the name of Christ is spoken by the priest, how all bow down reverently, while nobody gives a sign of devotion when the name of God is pronounced. And those who object to these rites because they are really religious, because they believe in *one* Supreme Being, in *one* God *only*, are called unbelievers by the Church.

And how few, comparatively speaking, of those who go to church to-day are really believers! One goes out of regard for his friends or business connections, who would be shocked, would look upon him as an unbeliever; another, because his church-going employer would dismiss him as an unbeliever; a third, to listen to the music; a fourth, to find an opportunity of making acquaintances with ladies; a fifth, out of mere habit; a sixth, because it happens to be Sunday; he would consider it a sin to read something instructive or to take up a useful work, so he goes to pass away the time.

And how many, or rather, how few, who go to church to-day prove by their actions that they carry the fruit of religion, love of our neighbor, in their heart? How many live in enmity with their nearest relations who perhaps attend the same church? How many of these church-goers neglect old friends who have become poor, with whom, when they were prosperous, they lived on intimate terms? How many church-goers do not hesitate to do wrong to their fellow-creatures and deceive them? What, indeed, becomes of what is exalted as Christian charity?

The Church has at all times considered unbelief in its dogmas as the greatest of crimes. It has marked those who dissented from them as heretics ; yet the belief of those so-called infidels, their faith in One Supreme Being, is infinitely more precious to the soul than all the Christian dogmas.

The steady, thoughtless following of a prescribed path is much more convenient than the strife and struggle for an individual conviction. The former is like an old, well-frequented, even high-road, while the latter is a stony, thorny path which we must clear for ourselves ; but it leads, not like the former, into a dark forest in which we have to grope for an outlet, but brings us to the sunny summit of a lofty mountain, with an extended view of the world lying at our feet.

The human spirit must *not allow* itself to be closed, it must *not refuse* to examine ; but it must look clearly and steadily into the eyes of that which hitherto has been opposed to its views. It must not turn away, either with pride or with cowardice, from that which so far has been strange ; but it should test everything calmly and without prejudice. The truth will ever issue victorious out of the struggle. Truth does not shun the light ; error and untruth alone fear it.

No more communities, no more sects, no Judaism, no Islam, no Christianity ; only one universal church of all humanity, in which all men shall dwell together like brethren, no matter of what race or nation ; and they shall pray to one Eternal God, the creator and ruler of the world, the loving father of all living creatures. That is the great doctrine which the sublime lover of mankind, Jesus, has taught ; for which he has died as a martyr, a martyr of true humanity, a martyr of love and truth.

When men will have recognized that salvation can only be found in this principle and in this faith, there will be no longer masters and slaves, no more oppressors and oppressed, no more deceivers and deceived, no more seducers and seduced ; wars will cease, peace will reign,—peace within families, peace among nations ; peace, joy, and happiness among all men. What Jesus has taught, *that alone* is true religion, the religion of love ; and in love there is freedom and justice, and all blessings of this earthly life.

Will this time ever come ? As surely as the Eternal God lives above us, it *will* come ; there *will* be one flock and one shepherd, but not in the sense of the Christian priests,—who preach that dogmas lead to salvation, while these priests themselves set the world an example of strife and dissent, of dishonesty and hypocrisy,—but only in the sense of the great Master, who has spoken these words, only in the sense of the founder of true humanity, which is based upon the belief in God.

The germs are plainly perceptible, for everywhere and in all communities there are very many who keenly feel the emptiness and absence of all reason in the present condition of the Church, and are longing for something higher.

Oh men ! perceive that spiritual slavery is the most degrading of all. Shake off these fetters and do not believe blindly in all you are asked to believe. Use your own intellect, reflect for yourselves upon the subjects which are the most important, the most sacred of life. Pull down with a strong hand the veil with which churches and sects have hidden the sublime idea of God, until it can no longer be recognized, and it will appear in full glory,

showering bliss upon all mankind. Only have the courage to throw off the old church-belief which has defied reason for centuries, has warped your spirits, and which will always try to destroy it. Have the courage to be true to yourselves, true to God, true to your neighbor. Have the courage to *will* to be free and happy, and you will be free and happy.

The Church tells you you must not doubt ; to doubt is sin. But I tell you if you find anything that does not agree with your reason, then doubt. But doubt with an honest desire to find the Truth, and you will find it. Doubt is the key to Truth. You have this key in your hand and you must use it to open the gates that lead to Truth. As a fellow-mortal, who has, through many years of his life, sought the Truth as a supporter, comforter and guide, I tell you there is a purer shrine than the Christianity or Churchianity of to-day. Believe in God, the Supreme Being, and follow the teachings of Jesus, and, like him, love mankind. Bless all, forgive all, help all. Live without folly, and die without fear ; for in life and in death, beneath you clings the Everlasting Arm.

## THE BIBLE.

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THE book which has been the foundation of the edifice of Christianity is the Bible. The Old Testament contains the prophecies, which, after the birth of Christ, have been brought in connection with him; the New Testament contains the history of the life and doctrines of Jesus. Before answering the question which forms the title of this book it is necessary to examine the history of the origin of the Bible and its contents.

For centuries past such an examination has occupied the attention of a great number of learned and conscientious men, among whom there were many strictly orthodox believers. The following has been the result of their inquiries:

The First Book of Moses has no historical value of any kind; it is a legend based upon verbal tradition. The Second Book of Moses is equally wanting in historical foundation, and indeed the same may be said of all the writings attributed to him. They contain so many contradictions, so many impossibilities, so much that is imperfect, that, on this account, they have lost all claim to credit. The opinion that Moses was the author of the five books which are known under his name is at present entertained by only a few. They are considered as a compilation which has gradually come into existence, and which must be the work of different persons. We see, for instance, that God is called in some of the books "Jehovah," whilst in others the name of "Elohim" is given to Him. The



Fifth Book was probably written under the government of Hilkiyah. (See Second Kings, chap. xxii.)

Either Joshua, Phinehas or Eleazar wrote the book of Joshua.

Samuel wrote the book of Judges, and the book of Ruth. He, with Nathan and Gad, is also the author of the two books of Samuel.

Jeremiah is the presumed author of the two books of Kings. Ezra wrote the book of Chronicles, and also the book of Ezra.

Nehemiah is the author of the book which has appeared under his name.

The author of the book of Esther is unknown.

Elihu is the probable author of the book of Job. Some scholars maintain that Moses was the author of the first and last chapter of this book, whilst others attribute the entire work to Job himself.

The majority of the Psalms were written by David, whilst Asaph is the author of some of them.

Solomon wrote the Proverbs, the Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

Isaiah and Jeremiah wrote the two books known under their names, whilst the latter is also the author of the Lamentations.

Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi are the authors of those books which, under their names, have been published in the Bible.

The Gospel of Matthew seems to have been written between the years 35 to 60, after the birth of Jesus. It was intended to prove to the Israelites that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Matthew calls Jesus a man.

The Gospel of Mark was written probably between fifty-five and seventy years after the birth of Jesus. In this book it does not appear that the author had ever seen Jesus. The orthodox Bible student, Barnes, says that Mark was not an apostle or follower of Jesus.

Luke wrote his Gospel between the years 50 and 60. He does not call himself an eye-witness, and, to judge from the introduction to the first chapter of his Gospel, he has only reported what he then believed to be true.

John wrote his Gospel probably towards the end of the first century. He begins with the doctrine of the god-head of Christ, and proceeds from thence to his manhood.

The Acts of the Apostles were written by Luke.

Paul is the author of the Epistle to the Romans, the I. and II. Corinthians, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, the I. and II. Thessalonians, the I. and II. Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews.

James is the author of the Epistle ascribed to him.

Peter and John are the respective authors of the epistles known under their names.

Jude, who is said to have been a relative of Jesus. is the presumed author of the epistle ascribed to him.

The Book of Revelation was written by John.

Whether all these suppositions are justified by fact is difficult to discover, but, as has been stated before, they are the result of the inquiries of earnest and conscientious students. To get absolute certainty about it is a task which it would be difficult to accomplish. Many students maintain that, as Jesus himself has left nothing in writing behind, that all that has been written about him is based

upon verbal tradition and was composed in the first centuries of the Christian era.

Before the meeting of the Council of Nice, in the year 325 of our era, there existed a great number of Gospels, of the existence of which tradition has come down to our days. There are the following: The Gospels of Andrew, of Apelles, of the Twelve Apostles, of Barnabas, of Bartholomew, of Basilides, of Cerinthus, of the Ebionites, of the Egyptians, of the Encratites, of the Childhood of Jesus, of Eternity, of Eve, of the Gnostics, of the Hebrews, of Hesychius, of Jacob, of the Death of Mary, of Judas, of Thaddeus, of Lucius, of Lucian, three different ones of the Manichees, of Marcion, three of the Birth of Mary, of the Nazarenes, Matthias, of Nicodemus, of Paul, of Perfection, of Philip, of the Apostle Peter, of the Simonians, of the Syrians, of Tatius, of Thomas, of Valentine, of the Living, of the Family of Jesse, of the History of Jesus (probably written by one of his nearest relatives), of the History of Mary, two collections of Discourses by Mary, the History of the Birth of Jesus, the History of the Death of Jesus, the Acts of the Apostles by Abedias, the History of Joseph, etc.

The Apocryphal writings (the Church gives this name to those writings which are not canonical, that is to say, not accepted by the councils) circulated through the first three centuries of our era, and were considered as reliable until the Council of Nice. At this council a vote was taken as regards the acceptance or rejection of the different writings. Those known as the Apocrypha were rejected, and those contained in our Bible were considered as the foundation of Christianity.

But the decisions of the Council of Nice were not everywhere accepted. On the contrary, great objections were raised against them by men of the highest honor in the Christian Church. The famous father of the Church, Augustine, towards the end of the fourth century wrote a letter to Saint Faustus on this subject, in which he expresses himself as follows: "The so-called Gospels were written long after the days of the Apostles by unknown men, who feared that the world would give no credit to their narratives because they had not been eye-witnesses of the events which they related. These writings, which have been known under the name of the Apostles, contain so much that is unreasonable and contradictory that there is neither harmony nor coherence in them."

Another remarkable expression of Saint Augustine may be quoted here: "The more absurd and contradictory to reason the Bible is, the more I believe it."

It sounds like bitter irony upon the intellect of those generations when we consider that in the midst of Christendom, the Bible was denounced as a dangerous book (Concilium Tolosanum, 1229), and only the Psalms were considered as innocuous. The clergy was not allowed to read the Bible in translations, and there were very few in those days who were masters of Hebrew and Chaldean.

Even to-day there exists the greatest possible difference of opinion in regard to the value of the books of the Apocrypha. They are not recognized by the Catholic Church, nor by many authorities in the Protestant Church. The small portion which we find in Luther's translation of the Bible has been excluded from the Vulgata,—that version of the Bible which was recognized by the

Council of Trent as the only genuine authority. Nor do we find these books in the Bibles which are printed in England and in the United States, particularly not in those published by the Bible Societies in these countries. The Scotch Puritans and the Low Church party of the Anglican Church reject the Apocrypha as the "falsification of God's Word." It may be remarked here that there is also a Sixth and Seventh Book of Moses, which are full of cabalistic and magic lore, and which cannot be found in any Bible.

The writings of the Old Testament, which have generally been recognized as Canonical, were written in the Hebrew language, with the exception of a few pieces of Ezra and Daniel, which were written in Chaldean.

Jesus spoke to his disciples and to the multitudes in Hebrew, and his sayings were afterwards translated into Greek, from memory, by some of his hearers, or were written down after tradition. Owing to the great difference between these two languages, and the then prevailing ignorance of philology, misunderstandings and errors could hardly have been avoided. We must also take into consideration that in those days, before the invention of printing, everything had to be copied, which also opened the way to errors. The numerous translations, very few of which have been made from the original text, but were made after previous translations, show such variety that a Catholic is not allowed to read a Protestant Bible, and a Protestant would refuse to use a Catholic one, and yet it is said that *all* Bibles express the word of God!

It is certain that most of these translations were made during the Middle Ages by priests and monks, and even among these the knowledge of languages was very deficient.

For instance, in 1530, a monk said from the pulpit: "They have lately discovered a new language which they call Greek. We should take care to shun this language, which produces all kinds of heresy. We see in the hands of a great many people a book in this language, which they call the New Testament, which is full of snares and blasphemy. As regards the Hebrew language, everybody who learns it will at once become a Jew." Such is the report of the historian Sismondi in his *History of the French*, vol. xvii., p. 364.

The Bible has been revised at different periods, and on each occasion numerous errors have been discovered. Dr. James enumerates two thousand different readings in two different versions; and Lucas van Bruegge, who revised the printing of the Vulgata in Louvain, in 1573, discovered in the Clementine Vulgata not less than four thousand passages which had to be corrected. Within the last few years a Commission of Theologians, in England and in the United States, has been engaged in a revision of the New Testament. This new revision has again been the cause of numerous differences. It contains more than two thousand passages which have been disputed. Since then the Baptist Church has appointed Dr. Conant, who took part in the revision of the New Testament, to undertake a revision of the Old Testament.

On account of all the differences among the various sects as regards the interpretation of the Bible, and in spite of all the endeavors of Christian theologians, no conformity of opinion has been reached.

Professor Hasselbach, of the University of Vienna, lectured for twenty-two years on the first chapter of Isaiah, and had not exhausted his subject when death overtook

him. Chancellor Peuziger, of the University of Tuebingen, delivered in four years three hundred and twelve lectures on the prophet Daniel; then he lectured for twenty-five years on the Prophet Isaiah; during the following seven years he delivered four hundred and fifty-nine lectures on Jeremiah, and had only one-half exhausted the subject when death overcame him in his eightieth year.

Is the Word of God so obscure and difficult that it requires so much study and research and so much science to make it intelligible? What is the common man, without education, to do, if so much study is required, and so much learning is spent in making the Bible intelligible?

We will now see in what relation to the Bible stand the different sects, not forgetting that the Bible is supposed to be the common foundation of Christianity. The Manichees rejected the whole of the New Testament and declared it false. The Valentinians maintained the Bible was full of errors and contradictions. The Marcionites declared the Gospels to be full of falsehood. The Sevenians and Encratites accepted neither the Epistle of Paul nor the Acts of the Apostles. The Nazarines rejected all of Paul's Epistles, and considered him an imposter. The Corinthians rejected the Acts of the Apostles. Luther refused to acknowledge the book of Esther as canonical, and to recognize the Apostles as the authors of the Epistles to the Hebrews, as well as the Epistles of James and Jude, and the Revelations. Zwingli rejected the Revelations as uncanonical; Œcolampadius declared that the Revelations, as well as the Epistles of James and Jude, the Second Epistle of Peter and the Second and Third of John, could not be placed by the side of the other portions of the Bible. It is the same with the different sects



to-day as it was centuries ago. The Methodists discover in the Bible the basis of the system of their founder, John Wesley. To the Presbyterians it teaches eternal damnation, to the Universalists the eternal happiness of all mankind. The Quakers find in it the Spirit which leads to truth; the Swedenborgians only accept certain books, such as the four Gospels and the Revelations. In this manner every sect forms its own views of the Bible, which, in many instances, are contradictory to those of other sects; and yet every denomination relies upon the Bible for its authority. During the time of the persecution of the Quakers in Massachusetts in the second half of the seventeenth century, the Bible was relied upon as an authority for the Puritans, for the Quakers, for the High Churchmen, and the Catholics. Is it possible that *God's Word*, which is supposed to be contained in the Bible, is capable of so many interpretations, and even rejection?

After this brief review of the history of the origin of the Bible, let us pass to an examination of its contents.

It would be a great piece of narrow-mindedness and injustice to reject the Bible as a whole. On the contrary, it contains much that is true, many wise precepts of morality, and some sublime poetry. In the Psalms and in the Book of Job we find many expressions of the power and goodness of God. But we find in the Bible much that has no relation whatever to religion, much that is actually opposed to human feeling, as, for instance, the terrible curses contained in Psalm cix. The Bible contains many errors, much that is obscure and incomprehensible, much that is confusing and diffuse, much that can only be understood by the scholar who is learned in ancient languages. The greater part of the Old Testament is occupied by Mosaic



history and lawgiving ; it contains many contradictions, much that is illogical and impossible, much that stands in direct opposition to science, much that is obscure, mysterious and unsatisfactory, and even much that is opposed to morality and decency. The Bible may be compared to a mine, where rich layers of gold ore are imbedded in worthless minerals,—wealth hidden under rubbish ; a mixture of good and evil, of wisdom and folly, containing the opinions of wise men and the tattle of old women, eternal truths and Mosaic prejudices. The Bible furnishes another proof for the maxim that that which is old is not always good.

The majority of the prophecies in the Old Testament are very obscure, whilst others, which are more definite, have been proved to be false ; for instance, those relating to the duration of the Jewish Kingdom ; to the coming of the Messiah, who will sit on the throne of David and overcome the Babylonians ; to the destruction of the world, and many others.

In the relation of actual events we meet with much that is incredible, unreasonable and impossible. We find in the First Chapter of the First Book of Moses that God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh, like a tired laborer. Who in these days will consider this as anything else but a fable ? Whoever feels still inclined to believe it should consider that Adam and Eve, who, according to the Bible, were the first created human beings, did not exist during the first days ; how could there be an intelligent being to report on the previous events of creation ? Geognosy has taught us that the world has existed hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of years.

Now as to the history of Adam and Eve, who could have written it? Certainly not those two. And what does this history tell us? God tempted them with the tree of knowledge, by which, undoubtedly, is meant the abstinence from sexual intercourse. And because they followed the natural instinct, which God himself had planted in them, he imposed upon Eve and all coming generations the painful bearing of children. Who that believes in God's fatherly love and justice can think him capable of such cruelty and appalling injustice? And if Eve and the entire female sex are punished in such a manner, how does it happen that many animals, who had nothing to do with the fall, suffer the same pain in bringing forth their young?

We read in Joshua, chap. x. 12, 13, that the sun stood still at his command. Whoever would believe in these days that any man has the power to dictate the course of the stars, or to arrest them, would be ridiculed; we should send him to a mad-house. We know that the universe is governed by unchangeable and eternal laws. The fourteenth verse of the same chapter says: "And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man." This is, if possible, even stranger than the standing still of the sun.

According to the Book of Jonah, ii. 1 and 2, Jonah remained for three days in the belly of a whale; and he prayed to God, and at God's command the whale threw him out upon the land. It is a well-known fact that the whale with its enormous size has a very narrow gullet, through which a body of the size of a man could not possibly pass. It is still more incredible how a man could live there for three days and be capable of thinking and

praying. No man with common sense could be brought to believe this.

In the Fourth Book of Moses, xxii. 28 to 30, we find a conversation between Balaam and a she-ass.

In Second Kings, ii. 11, it is said, that the prophet Elias ascended unto heaven on a fiery chariot drawn by fiery horses.

In the Second Book of Moses, iv. 3, we read that Moses had thrown his staff on the ground, which was changed into a serpent, and before which he fled.

In Judges, xv. 16-19, Samson slew a thousand men with the jaw-bone of an ass, whereupon God opened a back tooth of the jaw-bone, from which water flowed to quench Samson's thirst.

In I. Kings, xvii. 6, ravens came morning and evening, and brought meat and bread to Elijah to satisfy his hunger.

In II. Kings, vi. 6, we are told that an iron axe was swimming on the water.

According to Hebrews, xi. 29, and Psalm cvi. 9, Moses led his host through the Red Sea.

Innumerable impossibilities of this kind are related in the Bible. Could there possibly be, in these days, a man of common sense who would take such fables for truth? And is this the word of *God*?

We will now examine some of the contradictions contained in the Bible:

*God is Love.*

I. Eps. John iv. 16. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

*God is Unmerciful.*

Nahum i. 2. God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries.

*God is Kind and Merciful.*

James v. 11. The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

*God is Cruel and Unmerciful.*

Jeremiah xiii. 14. And I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them.

*God is Forbearing.*

Psalm cxlv. 8. The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy

*God is not Forbearing.*

I. Samuel vi. 19. He smote of the people fifty thousand and three score and ten men: and the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter.

*God is all Powerful.*

Matthew xix. 26. With God all things are possible.

*God is not all-Powerful.*

Judges i. 19. And the Lord was with Judah; and he drove out the inhabitants of the mountain, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.

*God is Invisible.*

I. John iv. 12. No man hath seen God at any time.

*God is not Invisible.*

Exodus xxxiii. 11. And the Lord spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.

*God sees and knows all things.*

Proverbs xv. 3. The eyes of the Lord are in every place.

*God does not see and know all things.*

Genesis iii. 8. And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, amongst the trees of the garden.

*God is Unchangeable.*

Mal. iii. 6. For I am the Lord,  
I change not.

*God is Changeable.*

Genesis vi. 6, 7. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, even the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

*God Approves of Burnt Offerings.*

Exod. xxix. 18. And thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: it is a sweet savor, an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

*God Disapproves of Burnt Offerings.*

Jerem. vi. 20. Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.

*Robbery Forbidden.*

Lev. xix. 13. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him.

Exod. xx. 15. Thou shalt not steal.

*Robbery Commanded.*

Exod. iii. 21, 22. When ye go, ye shall not go empty: but every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

*God cannot Lie.*

Num. xxiii. 19. God is not a man, that he should lie.

Hebr. vi. 18. It was impossible for God to lie.

*God sends Lying Spirits to Deceive.*

I. Kings xxii. 23. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.

*God is Peaceful.*

I. Cor. xiv. 33. God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

*God is Warlike.*

Exod. xv. 3. The Lord is a man of war.

*There is to be a Resurrection of the Dead.*

I. Cor. xv. 52. The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised.

*There is to be no Resurrection of the Dead.*

Isaiah xxvi. 14. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise.

*Man is Justified by Faith Alone.*

Romans iii. 28. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

*Man is not Justified by Faith Alone.*

James ii. 24. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

*Children are Punished for the Sins of their Parents.*

Exod. xx. 5. I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children.

*Children are not Punished for the Sins of their Parents.*

Ezek. xviii. 20. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father.

*The Oath Commanded.*

Genesis xxi. 23. Now therefore swear unto me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me.

*The Oath Forbidden.*

Matthew v. 34, 35, 37. But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool. But let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay; whatsoever is more than these cometh from evil.

*The Sabbath Instituted.*

Exod. xx. 8. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

*The Sabbath Repudiated.*

Col. ii. 16. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days.

*Slavery Ordained.*

Levit. xxv. 45, 46. Of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you : and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession ; they shall be your bondsmen forever.

*Murder Ordained.*

Exod. xxxii. 27. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel. Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.

*The Christian Yoke is Easy.*

Matt. xi. 30. My yoke is easy and my burden is light.

*Wisdom a Source of Enjoyment.*

Prov. iii. 13, 17. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

*Temptation Desirable.*

James i. 2. Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.

*Slavery Forbidden.*

Exod. xxi. 16. He that steal-eth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

Exod. xxii. 21. Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him.

*Murder Forbidden.*

Exod. xx. 13. Thou shalt not kill.

*The Christian Yoke is not Easy.*

II. Tim. iii. 12. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

*Wisdom a Source of Grief.*

Eccl. i. 18. In much wisdom is much grief : and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

*Temptation Not Desirable.*

Matt. vi. 13. Lead us not into temptation.

*Prosperity a Blessing.*

Ps. cxii. 1, 3. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord. Wealth and riches shall be in his house.

*Jesus Crucified at 3 o'clock.*

Mark xv. 25. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

*Prosperity a Curse.*

Matt. xix. 24. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

*Jesus Crucified at 6 o'clock.*

St. John xix. 14, 16. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified.

*Judas Returned the Blood Mite.*

Matt. xxvii. 3. Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders.

*Judas Did Not Return the Blood Mite.*

Acts i. 18. Now this man (Judas) purchased a field with the reward of iniquity.

Can a book containing so many and such gross contradictions be called the Word of God?

What strange ideas many of the writers of the Bible formed of God will best be illustrated by some passages in which they attribute to Him every human quality and even human occupation.

In the First Book of Moses ii. 8, he is made a gardener: "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden."

In the same book, iii. 21, he is made a tailor: "Unto Adam, also, and his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them."

In the Second Book of Moses i. 21, he is made a builder: "And it came to pass because the midwives feared God that he made them houses."



In Isaiah, xxxiv. 6, he is made a butcher : " The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams : for the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah."

In the Second Book of Moses, xxxii. 15, 16, God is made a stone-cutter : " And Moses turned and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand : the tables were written on both their sides ; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables."

In the Fifth Book of Moses, xxxiv. 5, 6, he is made an undertaker : " So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord, and he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab."

The Eternal God is represented to us as a barber and hairdresser in Isaiah vii. 20. " In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the King of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet."

But enough of this.

Far more revolting than all this that is impossible and contradictory in the Bible are those indecent passages which we can only point out with disgust, as for instance, I. Moses xvi. 1 to 4 ; I. Moses xii. 1 to 16 ; I. Moses xix. 8 ; I. Moses xxx. 1 to 23 ; I. Moses xxxviii. 2, 3, 8, 9 ; II. Moses xxii. 16 and 19 ; II. Moses xxxiv. 15, 16 ; III. Moses xv. 16 to 27 ; III. Moses xviii. 6 to 23 ; III. Moses xx. 11 to 21 ; IV. Moses v. 12 to 22 ; IV. Moses xxxi. 17 to 18 ; V. Moses xxi. 10 to 14 ; V. Moses xxii. 13 to 17 ; Judges xxi. 12 ; I. Samuel xxv. 22 and 34 ; II. Samuel xii. 11, 12 ; II. Samuel

xvi. 22 ; I Kings xiv. 24 ; II. Kings xviii. 27 ; II. Kings xxiii. 7 ; Ezekiel xxiii. 2 to 21, and many others.

As I have reprinted literally the different passages to which I referred before, I would also like to quote those above, but I do not wish to defile my book with such indecency. Those who wish to convince themselves may look up these passages ; but I earnestly advise women who will read this book not to look them up. Even every man of moral character, while reading them, would be filled with disgust and horror. Could parents who care for the welfare of their children give them any other book which, by the side of so much that is good, contains so much that is corrupt and immoral ? Yet the Bible is given to young people as the foundation of religious instruction. That the attention of children, in some way or other, will be called to these passages cannot be avoided. Of course they will read them, and the seed of immorality will thus be planted in their innocent hearts.

The Bible has been called the Word of God, and it has been asserted that its contents are based upon divine revelation. By revelation is meant an extraordinary gift of God to men, by which they have gained knowledge of things which hitherto had been hidden from them, and which, by their own mental exertion, they could not have fathomed. Leaving out of the question that God, in His almightiness, had no need of such extraordinary means and mysterious announcements to particular persons to make his will prevail, we cannot suppose that his justice would confer such revelations to a portion of mankind only. Only one-third of the people living on this earth belong to the Christian religion. If the Bible alone contains the true revelation and the true source of knowledge,

by far the larger portion of mankind will be excluded from it. Is such a thing possible ?

All enthusiasts and sectarians of the Christian Church have referred to the Bible to find arguments for their secession from other denominations. We find to this day in the system of Mormonism an example of such justification for dissent.

A book which is so full of contradictions, and which bears on its face the stamp of human error and weakness, cannot be a divine revelation. In consequence of the belief that the Bible contains irrefutable truth and divine revelation, and is a commandment which cannot be disobeyed, it has impeded the progress of humanity and scientific advance ; it has kept mankind in servitude and encouraged despotism ; has been the cause of cruel wars, and of the horrors of the Inquisition.

Our times are different and more enlightened than the times in which the books of the Bible were written. Thought and inquiry have asserted their rights and enlightened the world. Reason, observation and experience have become our guiding stars.

What could we think to-day of a teacher of geography who would instruct his pupils after the system of Ptolemy, or of a physician who would treat his patients after the precepts of Hippocrates ? Mankind thinks, and as it has progressed in material matters, it has also advanced in ideal subjects, in the knowledge of religious life. The world is different from what it was two thousand years ago ; it has not become irreligious or godless ; it is only striving to free itself from dogmatism, by which reason has been kept in bondage.

The theory of the divine inspiration of the Bible is no longer tolerated. It has been proved by unprejudiced and

conscientious students that many of the events related in the Bible have their origin in older myths and legends. The English archæologist, George Smith, who died only a few years ago, has achieved great results in this respect. He has succeeded in putting together the old tablets with cuneiform inscriptions which have been found buried in rubbish in Assyrian palaces, and has deciphered them. Among these he found an account of a great inundation, which, no doubt, was the origin of the biblical narrative of the flood. He also found a history of the creation of the world, which agreed with that given in the Bible, by which sufficient proof is furnished that the latter has been derived from the former.

A legend similar to that of the biblical deluge we find in Grecian mythology, according to which Jupiter, in order to destroy the ungodly race of men, caused a great flood to cover the earth, from which only Deukalion and his wife Pyrrha were saved to re-people the world.

The Bible, with its legends, prophecies, contradictions, and alleged miracles, can only be rightly understood if we take into consideration the history and mode of thought of those times. For everybody else it is a doubly-sealed book, the true meaning of which cannot be understood by a world in which new knowledge and new ideas have been formed upon a basis of science different from that which existed in those days. Many and great errors have been propagated by the Bible among Christian nations; many fanatical actions and persecutions have been caused by the mysterious and obscure passages which it contains; thousands of people have been deprived of their reason and ended their miserable lives in mad-houses in trying to unravel the mysterious passages in which the Bible abounds.

There are many people who are constantly reading the Bible and who consider this a service for the glory of God. Many have read the Bible from beginning to end, some more than once, yet they have not understood, nor can they ever understand, what they have read. They read without reflection or meditation upon that which is before them. From their earliest youth they have been impressed with the divine character of the book, and their faculty of thought has been smothered by these contradictory dogmas; only by these means the belief in the Bible could be kept alive in them. Professor Huxley says: "Whilst the doctrines of ancient heathenism, the stories of Osiris and Zeus, are considered as fables, and anybody who would take them for anything else, or look upon them as facts, would be ridiculed, yet there are innumerable people who still believe in the fantasies of the uneducated people who lived in Palestine nineteen centuries ago, and which have been written in the Bible by unknown and ignorant writers. People who consider themselves educated look upon these fables—for instance, the history of the creation of the world—as facts, and accept them as a standard of the truth of scientific inquiry."

Those who believe in the inspiration and revelation of the biblical writings, and consider the Bible as a "sacred" book, should remember that there are other, non-Christian people, who base their creed upon books which they claim to have been revealed by gods, or by God. These are the Vedas of the Brahmas in India, which is written in the Sanscrit language; the Tripitaka of the Buddhists, also in India, written in the Pasi language; the Zendavesta of Zoroaster, in Persia, written in the Zend language; the Koran of the Mohammedans of Arabia,

written in the Arabic language; the Shu-King books by Con-fu-tse in China, written in the Chinese language; and the Tao-te-King books, by Taotse, also written in the Chinese language.

Including the Jewish-Christian Bible, we have seven distinct works, said to have been inspired. The sacred hieroglyphic writings of the ancient Egyptians and the cuneiform inscriptions of the Chaldeans have almost completely perished. The sibylline books, containing the creed of the Romans, have been lost. The Edda of the Germans was collected only after the ancient faith of the people had perished. The sacred book of the Sikhs in India, is, as the sect numbers only a few followers, of little importance, and the Book of Mormon is a fraud of our century.

However different the above-named seven collections of holy writings may be, their followers believe, as firmly as the Christians believe of the Bible, that they are based upon divine revelation, and that they alone contain everything that leads to eternal bliss. Which of these revelations is the true, the really divine one? None. All without exception are the work of men, full of human weakness and human errors.

But there is a book of revelation written in golden, imperishable letters: The Universe. Not only man, with his wonderful organization and his superior intellect, preaches this revelation, but every flower, every blade of grass, every tree; the most powerful animal as well as the smallest, which is scarcely visible to the naked eye; the starry firmament with its thousands of heavenly bodies, proclaim the greatness, the wisdom and the love of the Eternal God.

And you, dear reader, carry within yourself another book of revelation which is always open before you,—your conscience, through which God speaks directly to you at every moment. Follow its voice. This revelation does not permit any contradiction or mystification which requires the explanation of others. It will never lead you astray, and will at every moment of your life point out the right way. We need no other revelation.



## CHRISTIANITY.

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CHRISTIANITY consists of three principal parts,—the dogma which has established the doctrine of the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, in which the Son, Jesus, or as the Christian Church has called him, Christ, is the person receiving the highest degree of veneration; *secondly*, the doctrine of Jesus; and, *lastly*, the sacraments and ceremonies. We will first consider the dogmas and ceremonies, and will examine the doctrine of Jesus in a special chapter, which will be devoted to him.

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### The Dogmas.

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A dogma is an article of belief; and all the articles of belief of Christianity have been established by councils, often held under the most revolting conditions of quarrel and strife. For instance, the councils at Ephesus in 431, and that at Chalcedon in 451, were noted for the brutal excesses and revolting means used to obtain a majority. The former is known in history as the “Synod of Robbers.” In these councils it was discussed which articles of belief should be recognized as orthodox; and thus the fundamental principles of Christianity were formed by men.

At the Council of Nice, in 325, it was discussed whether Christ should be considered the Son of God. Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, and his followers were



opposed to this doctrine. Arius explained that in the idea of a *son* there was the necessary condition of time; there must have been a period when the son did not exist, and also a time when his existence commenced; from which it was evident that the Father was older than the Son. The Arians were outvoted, and it was established that *Jesus was the Son of God*. The Council of Chalcedon declared the union of the divine and human nature in Jesus, and the Council of Constantinople, in 381, promulgated the doctrine of the Holy Ghost. We see that until the year 325 the belief in *one* God was accepted by the followers of Christianity; until 381 the *duality* of God was accepted; and after that the idea of the Trinity, three persons in one, has been the fundamental principle of Christianity.

Not one of the dogmas of the Church has been accepted without bitter strife and contention; yet the Church has maintained that all councils have taken place under the immediate guidance of the *Holy Spirit*. Can the idea of holiness be reconciled with strife and contention? The two councils of modern times, that of 1854 and that of 1869-70 in Rome, may deserve a brief mention here. At the first the Immaculate Conception of Mary and her mother Anna were promulgated as doctrines of the Church; at the latter the Infallibility of the Pope was established as a dogma. A great number of bishops who were at the council voted against this doctrine of papal infallibility. They were, however, compelled to accept it, and now pretend to believe in it. In such manner these dogmas have been created by *men*; and those who are unwilling to be forced into belief, and will not act against the dictates of their reason or become hypocrites, are con-

demned as heretics. Yet they look up to one eternal God, the foundation of all love ; they believe in Him with unchangeable faith, and find in Him all enjoyment of life and all comfort needed in the wonderful hours of their existence. Christianity is generally considered to belong to the monotheistic religions,—namely, those whose followers believed in *one* God. But as the belief of Christians includes God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Christianity belongs in reality to the polytheistic creeds,—to those which recognize *more than one* God. Jesus and his disciples, as Israelites, were monotheistics ; but this creed, as we have said, ceased with the Council of Nice. The only monotheistics of to-day are the Israelites and the Mohammedans.

There is not a single passage in the Bible by which we could sustain the idea of the godhead of Christ. On the contrary, Jesus always speaks of himself as the Son of Man. He speaks, indeed, of God as his father, and he commanded his disciples to pray to *our* father, from which it is evident he considered God not only his father but the father of all men.

As regards the principal person of the Christian faith, that of the Son of God, we may mention that the idea of a son of God did not originate with Christianity, but dates from a much more remote period. The history of Christ, as given in the Bible, resembles several heathen traditions so much that it is impossible not to connect the origin of this biblical story with several more ancient myths. It is said that Pythagoras, who lived about 600 years before Jesus, was considered by his contemporaries to be a son of a god. It was by no means uncommon in those days to designate the sons of great and distinguished

men as sons of gods ; and it is reported that the father of Pythagoras, 600 years before Jesus, like Joseph, was informed in a mysterious manner that a son would be born to him who was intended to be a benefactor of mankind ; and it is added that the mother of Pythagoras had been impregnated by a spirit sent by the god Apollo. Grecian mythology offers many instances of sons of gods ; but there is a Hindoo legend which is, no doubt, of more ancient date than many others, and which bears extraordinary resemblance to the story of Jesus as related in the Bible.

According to this Hindoo legend, the founder of the Hindoo religion, Christna (the similarity of the name strikes us at once), was the descendant of an ancient royal family of the Hindoos. At his birth, the room in which he was born was filled with rays of light, which proceeded from his father, Nanda, and from his mother, Deva Maria. The origin of the name of the Christian Mary is evidently to be found in that of the mother of Christna, as well as the Latin denomination of Diva Maria, the divine Mary. The parents of Christna, like those of Jesus, fled with him to protect him from the persecutions of a tyrant, who strongly reminds us of the Herod of the Bible. Christna, like Jesus, in his early youth, surprised his masters by his wisdom. He had also, like Jesus, one who preceded him. The John of the biblical history is called Ram among the Hindoos. Christna also received the name of the Good Shepherd ; and it is reported that, as a token of his humility, he knelt down and washed the feet of the Brahmins. One day a woman came to him and anointed his hair, which recalls to us the Magdalen of the Bible. Christna, like Jesus, performed miracles. His first miracle was the healing of a leper. He was crucified

and descended into hell, and rose again from the dead and ascended into Voicoutha, the abode of the Indian gods. The Baghavat Genta, the book which contains the life and doctrines of Christna is, according to philogolists, one of the most remarkable of the sacred books of the Hindoos, and more than four thousand years old. Christna is represented as a savior and as a god who became man to save mankind. All this reminds us vividly of the history of Jesus, as related in the Bible. The Medes and Persians believed in a promise, said to be derived from Zoroaster, that a virgin should bring forth a child who would be the ruler of the world; his birth would be announced by the appearance of a star, which would shine so brightly that its light would be visible by day. The priests were commanded to worship this child.

The dogma of the Trinity originates partly in the circumstance that among the ancients the number three was considered as sacred. Three distinct attributes were given to their gods,—the Creator, the Ruler and Preserver, and the Destroyer.

In the creed of the Hindoos we find three gods,—Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva the Destroyer, which as Trimurti form a trinity, and are represented assuch.

The trinity of the Egyptians consisted of the God Osiris, the Primary Power; the goddess Isis, the Eternal Wisdom; and their son Horus, who conquered the evil spirit Typhon, the devil of the Christians, and delivered the world from his bondage. The Egyptians represented their Goddess Isis with her child Horus in her arms, standing on the crescent of the moon under a panoply of stars, exactly as we see the Virgin Mary in many pictures by Christian artists.

The doctrine of Zoroaster contains also the idea of a trinity,—Oromasdes the good spirit, and Ahrimanius the evil spirit, who are at constant war with each other, from which proceeds the third part of the trinity, Life.

In northern mythology we have the three gods, Wotam, Thonar and Freya, forming the trinity.

The Akkad nation, one of the oldest Scythian people of Chaldea, believed, as has been recently discovered by Assyrian inscriptions, in a trinity which consisted of the following persons: Anna, the divine being of Heaven; Mulge and Ninge, the master and mistress of the Hidden Heaven, the abyss; and, lastly, Ea, or Hea, the god of the atmosphere, and the watery element, with his wife, Dao-Kina, the mistress of the earth.

Thus we see that we find the idea of a trinity among many nations of the pre-Christian era.

The trinity of the Christian Church consists, as we have said, of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and among them the son occupies the first and foremost place. The Christian church does not celebrate a single festival in honor of the Father; but several in honor of the Son, such as the day of his birth, the period of his fasting, his crucifixion, his resurrection and ascension.

The third part of the trinity, the Holy Ghost, is not received with particular honor by Christian people; there is only one day in the calendar devoted to him.

We find, however, in the Christian Church a number of festivals in honor of persons who do not belong to the Trinity. Those dedicated to the Virgin Mary occupy the first place in Catholic countries. Next to her follows the great number of saints, some of whom are of general,

others only of local, importance, who are frequently adored with more zeal and devotion than the Trinity itself, because they are considered the mediators between men and those whom they worship. As regards the Virgin Mary, she is by no means the same person in different countries; for instance, the Virgin Mary of Mexico is a very different being from the Virgin Mary of Bethlehem. The former is a dark-colored Mexican woman, of thorough Indian type, and the child Jesus, whom she holds in her arms, has also the deep color of the children of the country.

The doctrine of the Trinity has not been recognized by all Christian denominations. Among the old sects the following were opposed to it: The Arians, the Basilidans, the Carpocratians, the Collyridians, the Entichians, the Gnostics, the Jacobites, the Marcionites, the Marionites, the Nestorians, Sabellians and Valentinians. The Marionites imagined the Trinity to consist of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Virgin Mary. The Collyridians worshiped the Virgin Mary as a divinity, and brought sacrifices to her. The Nestorians denied that God could have had a mother. The Macedonians, in the fourth century, denied the godhead of the Holy Spirit. The Sabellians (250 to 260) insisted upon the *unity* of God, and considered the doctrine of the Trinity as immaterial. The community of the Christian Connection, which, in 1793, seceded from the Methodist-Episcopalians, rejected the doctrine of the Trinity. The Swedenborgians dissent from the doctrine of the Trinity as established by the Christian Church. The Hicksites and Unitarians do not believe in the Trinity; and the Puritan Community of Salem, Massachusetts, which was established in the year 1629, discarded the belief in the



godhead of Jesus. Of the Old Puritan Communities founded in 1700, thirty-nine have become Unitarians. The Greek Church does not celebrate the festival of the Trinity; and the Shakers believe that Jesus returned to earth in the year 1747 in the person of a woman, Anna Lee, to establish, by a second redemption, the millennium. In many other Christian sects we find a decided dissent from a belief in a trinity. One of the great reformers of the Christian Church, Luther, who in his Articles of Faith, very distinctly recognizes the idea of a trinity, very inconsistently raises decided doubts about it in other of his writings. In vol. xxii. p. 762, and in vol. xiii. p. 1726, of Walch's edition of Luther's works, we find: "Of the Holy Trinity \* \* \* This is one of the most difficult things. Our reason can be brought to believe that a child was born of a virgin, because God is almighty, but it cannot understand *that three persons exist in one* divine being, all of equal might, and that God himself has become man. Reason can never accept that one is three, and three are one."

We cannot imagine that Luther found it possible to believe that a virgin brought forth a child, whilst he had his doubts about a trinity; and yet he established the latter as an article of faith.

We must mention here two other reformers who did not doubt the doctrine of the Trinity, but on the contrary, defended it in the most violent manner,—Calvin and Melanchthon. The fanatical Calvin found the heart to surrender to the stake the noble-hearted Michael Servetus, who would not agree that three are one and one is three; and so great was the bigotry of those times, that the gentle Melanchthon approved of Calvin's horrible

deed, and congratulated him upon the destruction of the heretic.

We can find in no passage in the Bible a justification of the doctrine of the Trinity. Frequent attempts have been made to derive it from a text in the New Testament, from a passage of Matthew, xxviii. 19, in which Jesus says to his disciples: "Go and teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost." This passage cannot be found in any other writing of the Evangelists, and this circumstance subjects the genuineness of Jesus's command, as reported by Matthew, to grave doubt, as it can scarcely be supposed that such a highly important command should not have been reported by the others. In the sayings of Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, in the Lord's prayer, in the Parable of the Sower, of the Pharisee and the Publican, of the Lost Penny, of the Barren Fig Tree, and of many others, we find nothing, not even the slightest authority for the doctrine of the Trinity, which, as we have said before, was introduced in 381, nearly four hundred years after the birth of Jesus.

Christianity has not placed the idea of God clearly and distinctly before the human mind; but, by its dogma of the Trinity, that three are one and one is three, it has substituted a mystery which no one has been able to comprehend. The Church itself declares this dogma to be a mystery, and attempts to explain it in the following manner:

"The mystery consists in this, that there is only one God and yet three persons,—namely, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Each of these persons is God, yet there are not three gods, because these



three divine persons have only one divine being; they are only three distinct persons in one godhead. The Father is in himself from eternity; the Son is begotten by the Father from eternity; and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son from eternity." Is it possible for any human being endowed with reason, who is trying earnestly and honestly to understand this explanation, to find any sense in it? Even the most believing Christian, if he reflects at all about it, must feel hurt at being compelled to imagine the Supreme Being as consisting of three distinct persons, each of whom has his own particular functions; still more so if he remembers that he is compelled to believe in a dogma which was established many centuries ago. Nothing has created more strife and contention and bloody persecutions than this doctrine of the Trinity.

There are many passages in the Bible which directly contradict this dogma; for instance, I. Timothy ii. 5: "For there is *one* God, and one mediator between God and men, the *man* Christ Jesus." Isaiah xli. 9: "*I* am God and *there is none else*; I am God, and there is *none like me*." The First Commandment, as given in II. Moses xx. 2, 3: "*I* am the Lord thy God. *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me*."

The doctrine of the Church is impressed upon man from his earliest childhood, and instead of teaching him that there is but *one* Supreme Being, to whom we owe worship and adoration, he is taught also that God has had a son, and this son has had a mother, both of whom were human beings, yet that the son has become God, and the mother also,—who is indeed called the "Mother of God,"—to both of whom adoration is due. To these two

Gods there is added a third, the Holy Spirit. This belief in wonders is against all human reason and against the laws of nature; this polytheism is taught us from our earliest childhood, and we are told that we must believe in it, at the penalty of eternal damnation. Thus reason is killed within us, and love to the eternal *God* is rooted out of our hearts; for a great many people, because they cannot believe such doctrines which are against all reason, reject, with the belief in Christian dogmatism, also the belief in *God*; and they remain without a fast faith throughout their life, like a slender reed, which helplessly bends to every breath of passion.

The Christian Church speaks much of sins against the Holy Ghost, meaning by this the unbelief in ecclesiastical dogmas; but the *real Holy Spirit* is the spirit of truth, and the sin against the spirit of truth is the belief in false doctrines, miracles and supernatural things, which the Church demands of us. The spirit of truth teaches exactly the contrary of that which the Christian Church designates as a sin against the Holy Spirit. The striving after truth is always a holy action, and the spirit which calls it forth is the *genuine Holy Spirit*. What advantage can man derive from the belief of the divinity of Jesus, or in the doctrine of the Trinity? What blessings can they confer upon him? Can the belief in these dogmas bring comfort to our heart when it has suffered a serious loss, the loss of a beloved, faithful being? Or is not the saying "What God does is well done" the best and surest comforter? Can a man who has gone astray, who reproaches himself about the past, and is determined to do better in the future, find any comfort in the belief in such dogmas? Or is not his confidence in *God's forgive-*

*ness and fatherly love* the only blissful and pacifying comforter? Can a man who for years has been lying on a bed of sickness and is longing for delivery from his sufferings, can he find any comfort in the divinity of Jesus or in the doctrine of the Trinity? Or will he not rather look up cheerfully to God's love, which has often imposed heavy trials upon us, yet never more than we were able to bear? Will he not find comfort in the thought that all things are good to those who love God?

The dogmas of the *resurrection* and *ascension* are also contradictory to natural laws and to our reason; and if we look into the Bible, we shall find many contradictory statements as regards the resurrection of Jesus. According to Matthew, xxviii. 1, it was Mary Magdalen *and another Mary* who went to the grave of Jesus. According to Luke, xxiv. 10, it was the two Marys *and Joanna and other women* who went there. According to John, xx. 1, it was Mary Magdalen *alone* who went and said, "They have *taken away* the Lord." According to Matthew, xxviii. 2, an *angel* came from heaven and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre and *sat down upon it*. According to Mark, xvi. 5, the angel *did not sit upon* the stone, but sat *within the sepulchre* on the right-hand side. Again, Mark says that *a youth* sat at the right side. Luke speaks of *two youths*, and John of *two angels*. According to Luke, again, they did not sit, but they *came to them*. In Matthew, xxviii. 5 and 6, the *angel* spoke to the women. In John it was *Jesus himself* who spoke. According to Luke, xxiv. 12, Peter did *not* go into the grave. According to John, xx. 4-8, *he entered* the sepulchre, *and another disciple with him*. According to Matthew, xxviii. 9, they fell down before him and touched his feet.

According to John, xx. 17, Jesus *would not allow them to touch him*, etc.

We can see that here are a number of contradictions, which in themselves would awaken serious doubts as to the truthfulness of the event ; and even if we do not suppose that the writers wilfully told an untruth, we should remember that in those days little or nothing was known of the laws of nature, and that people were inclined to look upon everything in the light of a miracle.

The idea of the *resurrection of the dead* had its origin in Persian religious writings, from whence it found its way into Judaism and Christianity, and it finally became a Christian dogma. The laws of nature are no longer a sealed book to our times, and nobody will believe that a man who is once dead *can* be brought to life again.

The dogma of the ascension of Christ, which is similar to that of Elijah in a fiery chariot, belongs to those myths which abound in the Bible, and which are characteristic of the spirit of those days. Irrespective of the circumstance that nobody can point out the spot in which the so-called heaven is situated, into which Jesus is said to have ascended, we know in these days that the ascension of a man into the atmosphere, according to an unchangeable or natural law, the law of gravitation, is a positive impossibility. The narratives of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus are an ornamental addition to the history of his death. The story of his ascension is only to be found in Mark and Luke, whilst John and Matthew say nothing about it.

Jesus has said and has taught much which is good, true and beautiful ; but all he has said would have been scattered like leaves before the autumnal wind, scattered

and lost, if it had not been gathered and made into a wreath, and thus preserved to posterity by this poetical addition of the resurrection and the ascension.

The dogma of our *redemption* through the blood of Jesus owes its origin to the old Jewish practice of sacrificing steers and lambs to reconcile the anger of Jehovah. We can also trace it in the old heathenish custom of sacrificing men to regain the good-will of an angry god. It rests further upon the dogma of hereditary sin, according to which, by the fall of our first parents, all mankind has become corrupt and has lost eternal happiness.

Supposing, for the sake of argument, that the story of Adam and Eve, as it is related in the Bible, is true and not a fable, is it not unworthy of the idea of a God who not only condemned the first man but all the generations after him, because they followed the desire which with wise providence he had planted within them, with the blessing: "Be fruitful and multiply"?—a desire which is not only of a sensual nature, but which offers also the most supreme spiritual union which can be imagined among men.

The father of this horrible doctrine is Augustine, who maintained that through the fall sinfulness and mortality have become the inheritance of all mankind, even so that the new-born baby, by this inherited sin, is inflicted with the curse of God, and can only be delivered from it by the grace of God through baptism.

The Christian Church is by no means unanimous in its definition of what hereditary sin is, and the different divisions of the Church vary in their explanation of it. The Catholics declare the dogma of hereditary sin in this manner: That the spiritual gifts of men have not been

destroyed, but merely corrupted; that the image of God, after which man was created, is still within him, only that he has lost his likeness to God. The Reformers of the sixteenth century taught that by the fall the whole being of man has been changed, that he has become enslaved, and that his concupiscence, even after baptism, still remains a sin; whilst the Council of Trent declares that wise concupiscence cannot be considered a sin. The Pelagians, in the fourth century, taught that Adam would have died even if he had not sinned, and that his fall was accounted a sin to him only, and that all children are born free from sin as Adam was before the fall. Protestant rationalism describes hereditary sin as the weakness of human nature in recognizing and doing what is good. Some theologians of our times agree with Origen, who maintained that hereditary sin had its origin in an inclination toward evil which existed before man came upon this earth, and in consequence of which all human souls have been condemned to this earth as a punishment.

We see that not one school of theology can give a satisfactory meaning of the term "hereditary sin," nor put it in such form as to make it understood by men; yet the thinking man must see the impossibility of it. How opposed to the love and justice of God is the idea of hereditary sin! And if sin really descended from Adam upon all men, how could there possibly be a pure and righteous man? But history teaches us that at all times and among all nations, whether Christian or not, there have been excellent and perfectly pure-minded men. There is no hereditary sin; there can be none, *for sin is alone that wrong which man commits consciously and voluntarily.*

Upon this dogma of hereditary sin the dogmas of hell and eternal punishment have been based, on which, again, that of redemption by the blood of Jesus has been founded.

The dogma of *hell and eternal punishment*, although it is accepted in the Christian Church, may truly be called a hellish one. Like other Christian dogmas it has been interpreted in various ways. In a discussion between two Methodist ministers—Newman and Fowler—on this subject, two different views were exposed which deserve mention. We should state that formerly it was more a question of whether there is a hell or not, and, if there is one, whether those who are sent there will remain there forever, or only suffer for a certain time; whilst at present the issue is still about the nature and duration of punishment, yet in a greater degree about those who are condemned or will be condemned to go to hell. Both ministers agreed that there was a hell, but in other respects they were of different opinions on this subject. Fowler, who stands at the head of a missionary society for the conversion of the heathen, maintains that all these hundreds of millions of heathens are condemned to suffer in hell unless they are converted to Christianity, and that this conversion can only take place through the exertion of missionaries. Newman, on the other hand, maintains that not all the heathens will go to hell, but that an exception will be made in favor of many. Mr. Newman does not state where the line is to be drawn between those who will be damned and those who will be saved. He thinks that the children of heathens, before they have grown old enough to distinguish good from evil, will not go to hell, and he would also make this exception in favor of many grown-up heathens.



Much more definitely have two other Christian ministers—one a Catholic and the other a Presbyterian—expressed themselves on the subject ; so definitely, indeed, that one feels inclined to see devils in them, so vividly do they portray the torments of hell . In a monastery in Westphalia, a Catholic priest expressed himself as follows about the torments of hell : “ Imagine that you have the most fearful pain in a tooth—a pain which would not give you a moment’s rest, which would never allow you to close your eyes in slumber, that you had this pain which would drive you crazy, not in one, or two, or ten, but in every tooth in your mouth ; that would only be child’s play compared to the torments which the sinner will have to suffer in hell. Or imagine that you were compelled to hold one finger into a flame, but not only one finger, but a second and a third, or ten, both hands, your legs, your head, your whole body, and you had no power to escape, and had to suffer these tortures with full conscience for all eternity. And have you an idea of the meaning of eternity ? If all the water of the ocean had to be taken out, and if it decreased but one drop in a million years, when all the seas have been emptied eternity would only have commenced. And such torments all shall suffer who commit sin on this earth.”

The Presbyterian minister Furniss gave the following description of hell : “ Down in this place is a horrible noise. Listen to the tremendous, the horrible uproar of millions and millions of tormented creatures, mad with the fury of hell ! Oh ! the screams of fear, the groans of horror, the yells of rage, the cries of pain, the shouts of agony, the shrieks of despair from millions on millions ! There you hear them roaring like lions, hissing like ser-



pents, howling like dogs, and wailing like dragons! There you hear the gnashing of teeth and the fearful blasphemies of the devils. Above all you hear the roar of the thunder of God's anger which shakes hell to its foundations." He described the inmates of this hell suffering, without a moment's cessation, the most frightful tortures. He gravely says: "The roof is red-hot. The floor is like a sheet of red-hot iron. See, on the middle of that red-hot iron stands a girl. She looks to be about 16 years of age. She has neither shoes nor stockings on her feet. The door of this room has never been opened since she first set her foot on the red-hot floor. Now she sees the opening. She rushes forward. She has gone down upon her knees upon the red-hot floor. Listen! She speaks. She says: 'I have been standing with my bare feet on this red-hot floor for years. Day and night my only standing-place has been on this red-hot floor. Sleep never came on me for a moment that I might forget this horrible burning floor. Look at my burnt and bleeding feet. Let me go off this burning floor for a moment. Oh, that in this endless eternity of years I might forget the pain only for one single moment!' The devil answers her question: 'Do you ask for a moment, for one moment, to forget your pain? No! not for a single moment during the never-ending eternity of years shall you ever leave this red-hot floor.' " Mr. Furniss locates his hell in the center of the earth, and says it is 4000 miles from the earth's surface on either side.

The same Mr. Furniss has published in England some pamphlets for the "spiritual" education of children. He feels that future punishment is not pictured vividly enough, and he has done his best to supply the want. After de-

scribing the "Dress of Fire," and the "Red-hot Floor," in which are represented girls with the devil taunting their agonies, he goes on to picture the "Red-hot Oven," as follows: "See! it is a pitiful sight. The little child is in this red-hot oven! Hear how it screams to come out! See how it turns and twists itself about in the fire! It beats its head against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet upon the floor of the oven. You can see upon the face of this little child what you see on the face of all in hell—despair, desperate and horrible."

Leaving out of the question the innocent child, which has only been condemned for not having received baptism, let us consider the criminal loaded with the curse of damnation, and we "miserable men" must boil over with pity and indignation. To be condemned forever! forever a punishment without end! a punishment comprehending the incomprehensible infiniteness! The Church teaches us that God punishes men in order to make them better; but *after* infinity there is nothing; no repentance is possible. Thus punishment would only exist as punishment, and the loving, all-just God would only appear as a pitiless judge, who finds satisfaction in tormenting those creatures which have been made by him—torment them for all eternity and in the most horrible manner! torment them without end and without aim! What a horrible doctrine!

If the devil, of whom the Christian Church teaches, had invented these descriptions, these pictures of hell, they could not be more revolting, more hideous, more terrible. And now, imagine that there are people who really believe in hell, this monster-birth of darkest superstition. Think of such men who have lost their dearest ones by death, and

think of them as tortured in the torments of hell. What can be the feeling of such people? Can we wonder that so many persons, in brooding over these Christian dogmas, have lost their reason and are crowding the mad-houses? No! there is no hell! Heaven and hell, according to our own will and actions, live in our conscience; and God's fatherly love watches over us. Even he who is not free from sin or wrong need not fear hell. If he who has done wrong repents honestly and sincerely, he may comfort himself with the beautiful thought that if our heart condemns us, God is more merciful than our heart.

The dogma of the *redemption* through the crucifixion of an innocent man, like that of the Trinity, does not originate in Christianity. Centuries before the birth of Jesus the idea of redemption can be found in different forms among the Hindoos, the Persians, the Semitics, the Chinese and the Greeks, but most distinctly among the Israelites, not only with a view of a life after death, but of the immediate future on earth. The great misery which wars brought upon the Jewish race required immediate help; they desired not only redemption in a future life, but longed for an early delivery from the suffering of the present time. This desire grew into hope and this hope kept the Jewish people in constant expectation. They hoped and expected, day after day, the coming of the Messiah, who would deliver them from the bondage of the Romans, and make them the rulers of all other nations.

But even before that time we find the legend of a redeemer, who, like Jesus, died upon the cross. Kersey Graves, in a work recently published, furnishes proof that, before Jesus, not less than fifteen redeemers suffered death upon the cross. They are the following :

Thulis of Egypt . . . . .	1700 B. C.
Chritus of Chaldea . . . . .	1200 “
Christna of India . . . . .	1200 “
Alys of Phrygia . . . . .	1170 “
Hesus of the Celts . . . . .	834 “
Thammuz of Syria . . . . .	800 “
Indra of Thibet . . . . .	725 “
Bali of Orisa . . . . .	725 “
Iao of Nepaul . . . . .	620 “
Alcestor of Greece . . . . .	600 “
Mithra of Persia . . . . .	600 “
Sakia of India . . . . .	600 “
Quekalcote of Mexico . . . . .	587 “
Witoba of the Telingonese . . . . .	550 “
Quirinus of Rome . . . . .	506 “

We see that long before the time of Jesus martyrdom upon the cross was suffered by eminent men for the redemption of the world. And it may be remarked here that Christna of the Hindoos is believed to return to this earth before the end of all things, to conquer Rachchasas, the prince of hell ; which recalls at once the promised return of Jesus and the last day of Judgment.

Redemption, as the Christian Church teaches it, is a mystery which belongs to those wonders which, like others of the Christian faith, are opposed to the eternal laws of nature. The doctrine of redemption by the blood of Jesus is repugnant to the idea of God's divine justice, which could not permit an innocent man to suffer for the sins of others, for the sins of the whole world. It cannot proceed from divine mercy ; for mercy would become guilt, if it were subservient to injustice.

And if Jesus had been a god, as Christianity teaches

us, what becomes of the merit of the services which he rendered to humanity? If he had been a god, it was only right that he should be without sin; he *could* not possibly have felt bodily or mental pain, but would have been above everything that causes pain. That he was a man, and felt like a man, we find in his prayer: "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me;" and, in his last cry: "My God! my God! why has thou forsaken me?" If we take it for granted that Jesus was a man, and, like many before him and many after him, suffered for the sake of his convictions, we are undoubtedly right. By this he not only can lose nothing of his worthiness, but, on the contrary, he will become dearer to us and gain more of our heart's innermost esteem, as his doctrine is immeasurably superior to that of any other philosopher, his sublime doctrine of love which has never before been preached so beautifully and so impressively. *It is this beautiful doctrine which will finally redeem mankind*; and in this acceptance alone is Jesus the redeemer of the world. Christianity has by no means fulfilled its sacred task, but has left it unheeded; yet the word of Jesus is not lost, and a time will come when the principle of humanity which this sublime man preached will become a blissful reality.

The history of Christianity has taught that although the doctrine of Jesus has been preached, it has never grown into universal practice; yet the salvation of the world depends upon the realization of his word, which will redeem man from all wrong, from all sin, and from all evil. When love ceases to be a mere hollow name and becomes a blissful reality, when the words of Jesus, "Love ye one another," become truth, then, and only then, all wrong and all evil will and *must* cease in this world.

A pious man of the fifteenth century, Thomas-a-Kempis, wrote a celebrated book called the "Imitation of Christ," which contains much that is excellent and good. Yet it would be folly for men to try to imitate and follow him if he were a *God*; but if he was a *man*, then men may take courage and follow him; for then we have the hope of becoming like him, if we cannot become equal to him. What abuse, what sacrilege, has been committed since the introduction of the dogma of redemption! How foolish, how wicked is it to imagine that man can obtain contentment by anything else except by his own merits, by love of his neighbor, and by doing what is right. It is certainly much more comfortable to rely upon the death of Jesus, and the so-called means of grace of the Church, than to strive arduously and incessantly after salvation. Do not those who preach this nonsense understand that it is not honoring God, but degrading him, if we think that we can please him in any other way except by the faithful fulfillment of our duty and by living a righteous life? The word of a priest cannot relieve us from the responsibility of a wrong and a sin which we have committed. Repentance, which has been wrought by the fear of death, the unction with the so-called holy oil, the partaking of the sacrament by a man who has lived a life of injustice, cannot outweigh a long life of honest and true fulfillment of our duty, even if we do not believe in Christian dogmas.

According to the doctrines of Christianity, the whole human race was lost on account of the first fall, and it had no possible chance of redeeming itself. Then God in his mercy sent down his own Son, that he, who was without sin, might redeem the whole world from sin by the sacrifice of his own life. The condition under which we

partake of this redemption is the belief in the dogmas of the deity of Jesus and of redemption. By this belief, sinful humanity, which through the fall was condemned to eternal damnation, shall share the sinlessness of Jesus and be delivered from punishment.

A Hindoo expressed himself a few years ago on this dogma as follows: "The most unreasonable and distasteful doctrine connected with Christianity is the doctrine of sacrifice and redemption, or salvation through atoning blood. To us, not only the life of man, but that of the insect, is sacred and irrevocable. Our first commandment is, "Do not kill." And then to ask us to believe that the God of all worlds could only save the human race by the killing or the shedding of the blood of his innocent son is, to me, and must be in the opinion of any Buddhist, abhorrent, if not really blasphemous."

Christianity teaches us that God judges men according to their faith. Who believes in the doctrines of the Church will be justified; who does not believe will remain sinful. "He who believes and is baptized will be saved. He who does not believe will be condemned." This is the language of the Bible.

The most degraded of mankind, if they only express repentance at the last moment of their sinful life, and acknowledge their belief in the dogmas of the Christian Church, are sure of salvation; whilst the noblest of all men, who has been a benefactor of his fellow-creatures, but does not believe in those dogmas, will be damned for eternity. Every hypocritical fanatic, every dishonorable man who has betrayed and robbed widows and orphans, every tyrant who has trampled under foot the rights and liberties of nations, if they are only cunning enough to



cheat the devil of his inheritance, and believe at the last moment before they are going to close their eyes, will enter into eternity with a crown of glory ; whilst the great and good men, who have been a blessing to their generation, will enter into eternal damnation. The worst of all criminals, the murderer, if, at the last moment when the noose is around his neck, he professes the Christian dogmas, he is sure of salvation and of a life of joy with Jesus and the angels ; whilst the good man whom he has murdered, but who does not believe in the Christian dogma, is damned for all time, and subjected to the most horrible sufferings.

This dogma of the redemption, instead of making bad men better, must, on the contrary, make them worse. If such men believe that they only need acknowledge the dogmas of the Church to be delivered from their sin, why should they shun evil actions, why should they not continue in their wicked ways if they know that the blood of Jesus will cleanse them from all sins ? The Italian bandits, who make a business of robbery and murder, carry the rosary attached to their belt. They kneel down to pray to Christ and the Mother of God when the bell rings for mass. They go to confession and immediately afterwards resume their detestable occupation of robbery and murder. Is that not the natural consequence of this dogma of redemption ? The sale of Tetzels Letters of Indulgence was based on the same dogma. We need only cast a glance into the dens of vice in our large cities, where men wallow in the filth of corruption and crime, to be assured that many of these would renounce their lives of wickedness if they did not find in the dogma of redemption the hope of future impunity, and if they



were assured that only an honorable life can lead to a good end.

And what has become of the millions of people who lived before Jesus was born? What will become of the millions who are living to-day and who are not Christians? (only one-third of the people living on earth are professed Christians). And what will become of the millions that will be born not Christians? Are they all doomed to eternal damnation? Have virtue and purity of morals no more influence than belief in a dogma which has been invented by man?

The great reforming work of Jesus, which elevated mankind to the sublime idea of universal love, is not in want of mysteries about his birth and death. It does not require any miracles, which have exercised no noble influences on humanity, which, on the contrary, have only caused fanaticism or moral turpitude, which have led to divisions, misunderstandings, strife and superstition, and have brought war and bloodshed into the world.

The belief of the redemption of the world by the blood of Jesus is an illusion. Lord Erskine said: "If during our lives we have tried to attain that which is good, we may with all our weaknesses and faults enter into the darkness of death with the same joyfulness as in the ordinary paths of our lives; for we know that the author of our being will not arise against us, as an inflexible accuser of those moments of weakness which, like a few incomprehensible passages in a good book, have darkened the leaves of an otherwise glorious and well-spent life, but that his mercy will wipe them out and do away with our repentance forever."

These are golden words! But, in truth, mankind has

not yet been redeemed ; it must rather redeem itself ; and, in the first instance, it must cast off those fetters of dogmatic belief in miracles and wonders with which the Church holds it in bondage. Only when this has happened a new morning will dawn ; only then peace and happiness will rule upon earth, and brotherly love, which we see so sublimely realized in the person of Jesus, will celebrate its real festival of the resurrection.

Let us cling to *God* as our father, let us depend upon him with full and childlike confidence, like a good child puts in his own father, and then we need no more a redeemer between us and God than a child needs a redeemer between itself and its earthly parent. We ourselves must be our own redeemers. But this self-redemption requires all our energy. No thought, no desire, no word and no action of our lives are unimportant ; on the contrary, we should watch over them with all our strength of mind ; otherwise, they will become the links of a chain which will drag us down to a routine of indifference, from which self-redemption, by a mere transitory will, is impossible. Our reason and our conscience, which teach us to do right and to practice love, are the powers which give us strength for self redemption, and we should all take an active part in this work. Only if we strive incessantly to make our fellow-creatures happy ; when every one will contribute his mite to bring about this noble aim ; only when that mighty and corrupting egotism of our days has disappeared ; only then the stone which still is lying on the grave of humanity can be rolled away ; and the true redeemer, universal brotherly love, will arise from it.

There is so much misery and wretchedness in the world, by the side of so much that is beautiful and elevating ; so

much misery which is the cause of crimes, so many neglected children who are brought into life by unconscientious parents, who grow up without a good example and without education, and who lead a life which is unworthy of man. Here, again, is a wide field for the work of redemption.

Let us not lament and stretch out our hands towards a redeemer on the cross. Let us look into our own hearts, and try and deliver ourselves from all that is not good; then we shall be capable of taking part in the great work of the redemption of mankind. *Let us try to become better.*

But you must have the moral courage openly to confess your conviction and to pronounce it earnestly before the world; you must not wince before those who strive to subdue the spirit of truth, and before those who are their fettered slaves. In the spirit of every one who strives toward truth lives the power and the duty to contribute to the salvation of mankind.

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### The Sects.

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Even during the lifetime of the apostles a difference of opinion arose among the followers of Jesus on the subject of his doctrine. These divisions have increased in the course of centuries, and at the present moment there exists within the Christian Church about three hundred different sects, which vary more or less in their views and opinions; whilst the followers of each sect maintain that they alone possess the true faith. In the days of the Council of Nice, Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, wrote as follows: "It is a thing equally deplorable and dangerous that there are as many creeds as opinions of men, as many doctrines as

inclinations, and as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us, because we make creeds arbitrarily. Every year—nay, every moon—we make new creeds to describe variable mysteries. We repent of what we have done, we defend those who repent, we anathematize those whom we defend; we condemn either the doctrine of others in ourselves or our own in that of others, and reciprocally tearing each other to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin."

Soon there arose a number of sects, each of which pretended to represent the true faith, and many of which were ready to persecute those who believed differently. The Church of Rome was despotic, and the Reformed Church not less intolerant. Luther threatened persecution, Calvin carried it out. A Protestant parliament persecuted the Catholics; Catholic priests had to fly for their lives, and a reward was put upon their capture. The prelates were attacked by the Presbyterians, and the Presbyterians by the Independents. Cromwell's armies marched through the country, praying and murdering; they shouted, "Hosanna!" and sang psalms, waving their swords steeped in the blood of Catholics and Episcopalians.

Christianity itself does not agree on its fundamental doctrines, and the numerous sects into which it is divided vary still more from each other. Many, for instance, consider that the communion is a symbol of brotherly love, and maintain that the bread and wine are merely the symbols of the body and blood of Jesus, whilst others consider that at the communion they actually partake of the true flesh and blood of Jesus. Many believe that all men are intended for salvation; others that eternal damnation will be the lot of the majority of mankind. Some are

looking for Jesus' return to earth, whilst others reject this view. Some are looking forward toward the millennium, whilst others are not. Some see in Jesus the true God "in the flesh," others see in him only the Son of God, and many consider him only as a highly gifted man who has been sent by God for the benefit of the world. The doctrine of the Trinity has been the cause of innumerable contentions. Many believe in the existence of a hell, others do not. Some maintain the endlessness of the punishment in hell, others do not. Some believe in the resurrection of the body, others do not. Some believe that baptism should be performed by the sprinkling of water, whilst others insist upon immersion. It is a much disputed question whether Christians of different denominations may partake together of the communion, or whether one sect has a right to exclude another from it. The same differences exist on many other questions,—whether the devil is a person, or merely an allegorical figure; whether the soul of man, immediately after his death, goes to heaven or to hell, or whether it remains in a state of unconsciousness until the general day of resurrection. Some accept the so-called miracles as something supernatural and incomprehensible, whilst others try to explain them. These and many other questions have divided Christianity for centuries past, and continue still to divide it. *Can that which is subject to so much dissent, to so many and different definitions, can that be the truth?*

If we ask ourselves the question, how it has happened that so many divisions and differences have been called into existence, we must consider that each new sect, as it seceded from another, was actuated by the consciousness that it could no longer agree with the views of the other.

Thus each sect thinks that it alone possesses the truth, and the others are in error.

For centuries past Christianity has been kept in a state of constant warfare in consequence of the disputes and persecutions among the different sects. Even if the person of Jesus has been a certain bond of union among them, harmony and peace have not prevailed. Christians have hated, persecuted and cursed each other on account of their opinions of the meaning, the intentions and the doctrines of Jesus. The martyrs who found their deaths in prison, or at the stake, the millions of people who were killed during the wars of Christianity, are an eloquent but degrading monument of Christian dissent.

As has been stated before, Christianity has produced, since its existence, about three hundred different sects. It would hardly interest the reader to enumerate all the little differences existing among these sects, but it is of importance to make him acquainted with the principal opinions on which they differ.

The *Abyssinians* came into existence about 330. They observe both the Jewish and the Christian Sabbath, but their habits, even to this day, are partly barbarian.

The *Antidicomarianites*, opponents of Mary in the fourth century, maintained that Mary had children after the birth of Jesus.

The *Antinomists* since 1560, preached that the gospel was above the law; that not good works, but faith alone, was necessary for salvation.

The *Appollinarians* (390) denied that Jesus possessed a human soul.

The *Arians* (318) taught that Jesus was neither God nor man, but a being of superior qualities to the angels.

The *Armenian Church*, founded in the fourth century, rejected the doctrines promulgated by the Council of Chalcedon, and maintained that there was but one nature in Jesus.

The *Selected*, in Michigan (1882), consider themselves the chosen people of God. None of them must own more than \$3000; all over this must be divided among the poor.

The *Basilidans* rejected the Trinity.

The *Iconoclasts*, or Image Breakers, a sect of the Greek Church in the eight and ninth centuries, were opposed to the worship of images of saints.

The *Iconoclasts of Germany*, in the sixteenth century, had the same objection.

The *Birmingham Congregationalists*, in 1882, have no other article of faith but "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God and thy neighbor as thyself."

The *Bogomites*, of the beginning of the twelfth century, denied the Trinity, rejected baptism by water, and only accepted spiritual baptism. They abolished the worship of the cross, of images and of relics; they did not observe the communion, and declared all churches to be temples of idols, and all priests and servants of the church to be Pharisees.

The *Buchanites*, established in Scotland in 1783, by a woman, Elspeth Buchan, maintained that she was the third person of the Trinity and the woman mentioned in the twelfth chapter of the Revelation.

The *Campbellites*, also disciples of Christ, seceded in 1812 from the Presbyterians of Pennsylvania and baptized only by immersion.

The *Carpocratians* reject the Trinity.

The *Chiliasts* believed that Jesus, after his return to earth, will found the millennium.



The *Christian Connection* seceded, in 1793, from the Methodist Episcopal Church; they rejected the Trinity, but believed in Christ as a divine redeemer.

The *Collyridians* denied the Trinity, but worshiped the Virgin Mary as a godhead and brought sacrifices to her.

The *Docetæ*, in the fourth century, did not believe that Jesus appeared on earth as a man, but only as a spirit.

The *Dorrelites* were called after their founder Dorrel, who maintained that he was like Jesus, and was invulnerable.

The *Ebionites*, in the second century, believed that Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary.

The *Encratites*, in the second century, abstained from marriage and from meat and wine.

The *Eutychians*, in the fifth century, recognized in the person of Jesus only one nature.

The *Flagellants* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, thought it their duty to chastise themselves in public for their own and others' sins.\*

The *River Brethren*, established since 1705, baptize each other.

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\* The cruel sect of the Flagellants exists even in our days. We find them in existence in some counties of New Mexico. In the little town of Los Griegaos they celebrated, on the 24th of March this year, their Easter festival. The ceremonies began with a procession of about thirty men and women; they marched to their church, a primitive little hut. There five men undressed themselves down to the waist. A master of ceremonies, swinging a heavy whip, opened the procession; then followed two penitents, carrying heavy wooden crosses, with sharp edges which penetrated into the flesh and drew blood. Not satisfied with this, one of them stabbed himself in several places with a pointed instrument. Singing a solemn chant of their church, they passed through the village street, whipping themselves in the most desperate manner; with each blow blood came, flowing freely,



The *Society of Progressive Friends* seceded, in 1853, from the Hicksites and rejected the belief in the divinity of Jesus and the entire Christian dogma. It does not inquire into the faith of its followers, but merely requires that they should lead a righteous and virtuous life.

The *Society for Gathering the People of God*, established in Wurtemberg, is a branch of the Chiliasts, and believed that in the year 1853 the Turkish Empire in the Holy Land would be overthrown, and that Jerusalem would be re-established as the capital of the Millennial Messiah.

The *Gnostics* rejected the doctrine of the Trinity and other Christian dogmas.

The *Harris Christians* were established in 1875. Their founder is Thomas L. Harris, who pretended to be a prophet and the king of his followers, and claimed for his wife the rank of queen. Harris rejects the Trinity, and preaches a duality in one, Jesus and his wife Jesusa, whose representatives on earth he and his wife pretend to be.

The *Latter Day Saints*, or Mormons, were established in 1830. Their Bible is the Book of Mormon, which is said to have been written on two golden tablets and dis-

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and even pieces of flesh adhered to the whip; yet not one cry of pain, or a sigh, or a sob was audible. Before they reached the little church they had to undergo another heavy trial. At a little distance from the door the road had been scattered with the pricks of the cactus plant. When the bare-footed penitents reached this spot one of them hesitated; a shower of blows came down upon his naked shoulders, and with a wild leap he jumped into the thorns. At every step the blood poured from his and his companions' feet. The flagellation was continued in the church. That was the Easter festival of the Flagellants in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

covered in Ontario County, New York, in 1827. They recognize the institution of polygamy.

The *Hicksites* separated in 1827 from the Quakers, and rejected the doctrine of the Trinity.

The *Jacobites* in the sixth century rejected the doctrine of the Trinity.

The *People of Jehova*, established in Mocapin, New Jersey, since 1878. Their rites remind us of the Flagellants of the Middle Ages, and their Sabbath laws forbid the making of fire and cooking on Sundays.

The *Church of God*, also called the Winebrunnians, after the name of their founder Weinbrunner, believe in the millennium.

The *Macedonians* of the fourth century denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost.

The *Malakans*, or Milk Eaters, a Russian sect, on fast days live upon milk only.

The *Fifth Monarchy Men*, or Millenarians, of Cromwell's time, intended to establish a fifth monarchy comprising Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, of which Jesus was to be the king.

The *Millenarians* have existed since the first three centuries of the Christian era; they believe that Jesus would return to earth and found a millennial kingdom.

The *Millerites*, so called after their founder Miller, who prophesied the end of the world in 1843.

The *Monothelites*, of the seventh century, recognized only one will in the person of Jesus.

The *Nestorians*, established in the fifth century, did not believe in the Trinity, and denied that God could have had a mother.

The *New Jerusalem Church*, also called Swedenborgians,

after their founder, Swedenborg, dissent in many points from the Christian dogma.

The *Newjansk Sect*, of Russia, established in 1878, observes the barbarous custom of taking blood at the communion instead of wine.

The *Osgoodites*, established in 1812, observe neither the Christian Sunday nor the Christian sacraments.

The *Patripassians*, established in the second century, believed that God had become flesh and died in Jesus.

The *Paulicians*, established in 657, recognized only Paul as an apostle.

The *Pelagians*, in the fourth century, taught that Adam would have died if he had not sinned, that his fall was reckoned a sin to him alone, and that all children have been born pure as Adam was before the fall.

The *Purificants*, in Siberia and Finland, a sort of Puritans, held for their principal doctrines the obligation of matrimony for all marriageable people, the recognition of the wife as the head of the family, and the duty of the husband to confess to the wife once a week.

The *Restorationists*, from the third to the sixth century, maintained that finally all men would be saved and sanctified.

The *Sadducees* rejected the Trinity.

The *Sabellians*, of the third century, rejected the Trinity.

The *Sanctificationists*, of Texas, believe that a second Christ is dwelling now upon earth, and by divine inspiration is called the Second Christ. This sect, which is only a few years old, has already furnished a number of inmates to lunatic asylums.

The *Scotists* believe in the Immaculate Conception.

The *Severians*, of the fifth century, maintained that the body of Jesus was liable to corruption.

The *Socinians* in the fifteenth century disputed the divinity of Jesus and the miraculous conception of Mary.

The *Southcottians*, of the second half of the eighteenth century, were so called for their foundress, Johanna Southcote, an English servant girl, who pretended to have been inspired, and to have been sent to establish the millennium.

The *Thomists* disputed the Immaculate Conception.

The *Tunkers*, established in 1708, baptized by immersion; they observed Saturday as the Sabbath and recommended celibacy.

The *Unitarians* differ in many respects from the Christian dogma.

The *Universalists*, established in 1750, also reject many Christian doctrines.

The *Valentinians* do not believe in the Trinity.

We have enumerated here *sixty-one* different sects which differ from the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Church, not in minor details, like the two and a half hundred other sects, but in many of the vital principles. We find among these denominations so many strange phenomena, so many confused ideas, that we can only be astonished that men endowed with reason can be led to imagine and believe such things.

Quite recently, in 1882, a new sect has been established which belongs in this last category. It is important that we should enter a little more particularly into their history, in order to show to what excesses and to what follies Christianity, with its blind belief, can lead men. This new sect originated in Michigan, and, like the Oneida Colony in the State of New York they, have assumed the

name of Perfectionists. At their head is a former Methodist minister, Schweinfurth, and a Mrs. Beekman, who is considered by the followers to be the personification of the godhead. Schweinfurth declares the creed of the sect in the following words: "Mrs. Dora Beekman is Christ, and if you do not believe this you will be lost." The followers declare that the divinity has taken possession of Mrs. Beekman, that she has become one with God, and that when she speaks she speaks with the voice of God. The woman herself pretends to possess divine qualities, that she is called to preach the Word, and that she must fulfil her mission whether she is willing or not. Her followers announce her to be the Savior. At a recent meeting of the sect, one man spoke of Mrs. Beekman as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." Another said of her: "She is the light which lightens the world." Others called her: "God the Lord." Another states that he had had great trouble to find the Holy Ghost; he had prayed day and night, and yet not found him; he had addressed himself without success to Moody and other preachers. At last the Lord had taken him to Chicago, where he had met Mrs. Beekman, in whom he had recognized at once the Savior, and now he was happy. The meetings of these people are opened with singing; then follows a sermon by Mrs. Beekman, or by Schweinfurth, who tries to prove that Mrs. Beekman is God or Christ. When a convert declares that he believes this, he is perfect, and can do no wrong and can commit no sin. They maintain that they are God's people, that they are immortal, and are the sons and daughters of God. These new sectarians have caused great misery in families. That they can exist in these days is the consequence of

the Christian dogma and the belief in miracles ; and it is a proof how easily men can be led to folly, if it only assumes to contain something miraculous. On the contrary, many people refuse to believe what is reasonable, whilst they always are ready to accept what is unreasonable.

It is remarkable that the great Protestant denominations have, in the course of centuries, become more and more divided into smaller sects. The Baptists, originally established in 1639 by Roger Williams, have now been divided into the following sects : the Particular Baptists, General Baptists, New Connection General Baptists, Old School Baptists, Free Will Baptists, the Six Principle Baptists, the Seventh Day Baptists, the River Brethren, and the Free Christian Baptists. The Methodist Church, founded in 1720 by John Wesley, has since then been divided in the following sects : the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, the Bible Christians, the Wesleyan Methodists, the New Connection Wesleyan Methodists, the Primitive Methodists, the United Methodist Free Church, the Free Methodists, the Reformed Methodists, the African American Episcopal Church of Zion, the Calvinistic Methodists, the Christian Connection, the Whitfield Methodists, the Huntingdon Methodists, the Welsh Methodists, and the Church Methodists. The Presbyterian Church is divided into the following sects : the Presbyterian Church of the United States, the Southern Presbyterian Church of the United States, the Scotch Presbyterian Church, the Free Church, the United Presbyterian Church, the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, the United Presbyterians, the Synod of United

Original Seceders, the United Reformed Synod of New York, the Southern United Reformed Synod, the United Synod of North America, the Eastern United Presbyterian Synod, the Seceded Presbyterians, the United Reformed Synod of the South, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Southern States.

Each of these sects believes that its doctrine is the only true one. I ask again, *Can the truth be found where there is so much dissent and so much difference of opinion?*

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## Rites and Ceremonies

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In the same manner as the different Christian sects vary from each other in the dogmas of the Church, they are divided also in their opinions of the ceremonies of baptism and the communion. As regards the former, a large portion of the sects is in favor of baptizing the new-born infant, whilst others maintain that baptism should only be conferred on adults; and it is further a question of dispute whether a person who has been once baptized ought to be baptized again when he secedes from one religious community to another. Since the third century it has been the usage in the Church to re-admit a heretic without again baptizing him; and the Catholic Church of to-day decrees that all those who have been baptized in the name of the Trinity must not be baptized again. The Protestant Church also holds that baptism confers forgiveness of sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit, and can, therefore, not be repeated in the name of the Trinity. According to Luther, baptism, besides the forgiveness of sin, effects regeneration and the re-establishment of free-will.



The Reformed Church looks upon it more as a symbol and a pledge that God will grant regeneration and justification to those who believe. As both Churches considered baptism necessary for salvation, they are obliged to retain infant baptism, which, since Augustine, has come into general use. As there exists no direct command from Jesus or the Apostles in favor of infant baptism, and as the children are not capable of belief, which is supposed to exist at the ceremony of baptism, the Anabaptists reject infant baptism altogether, and instituted a repetition of baptism of adults. Quakers and Baptists do not baptize infants, and the latter have particularly stringent rules regarding this act. One of the principle Baptist journals, some time ago, spoke as follows: "The real baptism is not the immersion by an unauthorized minister, nor the immersion by a Presbyterian or a Methodist minister, even if they themselves have been immersed; nor is it effective if performed by every Baptist minister. Christian baptism is immersion by a Baptist minister, who himself has been correctly immersed by another correctly immersed minister." Of how much importance the Baptists regard the correct immersion will be shown by the following: In January, 1882, two colored men in St. Louis, who had been condemned to death for murder, were to be baptized previous to their execution, to cleanse them from their sins. The baptism was performed in prison by one minister and one deacon, two bath-tubs filled with water being placed in the cell. The two condemned men knelt down in the tubs, and the deacon bent their heads backward into the water until their bodies were completely immersed, upon which the minister pronounced the baptismal formula. When the ceremony was over and

the two men, according to the doctrine of their church, had been delivered from their sins, they were dressed and led to execution.

Baptism, as an initiation to higher knowledge, is of ancient Egyptian origin, and was brought from Egypt to the Semitics and Greeks, among whom it was in use as a necessary requirement for purification. It was only, as is the case to-day with the Baptists, performed upon adults. Jesus himself was baptized when he had reached manhood, and he commanded his disciples to instruct, before baptism, those who wished to be baptized—by which infant baptism is positively excluded. Yet the majority of the Christian denominations uphold infant baptism to this day.

Christianity teaches that men have come sinful into the world, and the ceremony of baptizing requires that the person to be baptized shall be asked if he renounces the devil and all his works, which question has to be answered by the sponsors. Irrespective of the circumstance that the new-born child in this question is considered to be corrupt and impure, how can the sponsors conscientiously promise that the new-born child, which is not able to think for itself, will for all time belong to the creed according to which the baptism is performed? Is it possible to accept as correct a doctrine which teaches that men enter this world in sin, and can only be sanctified and purified by being baptized? If this doctrine were true, how does it happen that there are so many wicked people? It can only be supposed that the ceremony of baptism has not been effective. And how is it with the followers of other creeds who have not been baptized, as, for instance, the Israelites? Are they all sinful people, or do we not rather find among people who

do not belong to the Christian faith many good and righteous people? And can it be denied that, among those who have been baptized, there are many wicked and depraved people? Contrary to the Christian doctrine humanity teaches that every man at his birth carries within himself the germs of future development for good or evil, and that it depends solely upon his education (an earnest warning to parents) and upon his own exertions to free himself from his sensual nature, and to gain moral liberty and perfect self-dependence.

A more beautiful idea relating to baptism we find in the second chapter of Luke, on the occasion of the presentation of Jesus in the temple. Such an act of receiving a child into human society and into holiness without baptism, and the driving out of devils, would be as sublime as it is blissful.

The Christian denominations differ greatly, as has been stated before, about the ceremony of the communion. Whilst some maintain that the bread and wine are only a signification of the body and blood of Jesus, others believe that they really eat and drink his flesh and blood. Some sects actually drink blood. What a horrible aberration of the mind! Can the thought which is impressed upon the Christians, when partaking of the communion in the words, "This is the true body and blood of Jesus Christ"—can this thought awaken a comfortable and blissful sentiment? Will not a thinking man turn away with disgust from the idea of eating and drinking the flesh and blood of a dead fellow-creature?

If Jesus said at the Last Supper to his disciples, "This is my body which is given to you, and this is my blood which is shed for you," did he not mean by this that he

died as a sacrifice in his endeavor to enlighten the world, and that they should think of him? But the Christian Church delights in explaining the sayings of Jesus according to its own ideas; and whilst, even during the ceremony, they consider him a man of flesh and blood, they make a God of him immediately afterwards.

A brotherly feast, a feast of love, should be held according to the will of Jesus. Such a one, without dogmas and the forgiveness of sin, would bring blessings to the followers of all creeds and denominations.

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### Miracles.

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Christianity is based upon the belief in so-called *miracles*—that is to say, phenomena directly opposed to the laws of nature. This need not astonish us, for in the days when Christianity first appeared the belief in miracles and supernatural things was general, and we find such miracles not only in Christianity but in other ancient creeds. They were brought into harmony with the religious ideas of the time and of the people, and were deposited as dogmas in their religious traditions. Even our own times offer an example of this. It is alleged that on September 22, 1827, the founder of Mormonism discovered the golden tablets containing the Book of Mormon. There are no miracles, there never have been miracles, and there never can be miracles. The word miracle means an event which necessitates the suspension of the eternal law of nature, a direct interference of God with the order of the Universe; and the Christian Church pretends to see in the miracles ascribed to Jesus, and reported in the New Testament, a decided proof of his divinity. Protestant-

ism believes in miracles, but it believes that they have ceased to take place ; whilst the Catholic Church maintains that miracles have been performed, and are being performed continually within its fold, in reply to prayers and by virtue of the relics of saints. We find some instances of such alleged miracles in the appearances which are said to have taken place in Lourdes and Marpingen, also in the statue of the Virgin Mary in the Franciscan Church of Athlone, in Ireland, which, after a priest had taken off the veil in which it was enveloped, is said to have opened and moved its eyes, and spread its hands and arms blessingly over the congregation ; whilst, from the dome of the ceiling, a bright light and innumerable stars appeared. Another of these alleged miracles took place in a church at Knock, in Ireland, where, the sick were healed by eating the plaster off the wall of the church.

Whoever believes in wonders, and that the eternal laws of nature can be suspended for a certain purpose, proves that he does not believe in the eternity of these laws of nature, and thinks that everything in this world depends upon chance and arbitrary will. That this is not so is proved by the system of unchanged order which exists throughout the universe. Whoever believes that God will make use of a miracle to gain a certain end acknowledges that God's creation is very imperfect. It would give a very small idea of the greatness of God if we were to assume that He was compelled, for certain purposes, to change His laws of the universe.

We can imagine that a man may do something to correct a mistake, to accomplish a purpose contrary to the ordinary course of events ; but such cannot be the case with God, who is infallible and unchangeable.

“Everything takes its natural course in this world,” says a well-known author of our times. “The experience of more than a thousand years has impressed upon the scientist conviction of the unchangeable laws of nature, with constantly increasing and irrefutable certainty. Not the slightest doubt can arise in his mind about this great truth; step by step science has gained every position which the belief in miracles maintained.” There is nothing miraculous; everything has taken place, and takes place, in a natural manner, which is determined by the laws of nature. The only miracle which exists is nature itself; the whole creation with all its heavenly bodies, its origin and increase, with its life and death. It is an eternal wonder, which we, with our limited earthly senses, cannot conceive. Miracles, in the sense of the Church, are impossible, for they presuppose a suspension of the laws of nature, an interruption in the order of the universe, which would bring everything into incalculable confusion—which would reduce the world to chaos. The return of the seasons, the millions of worlds and their regular course, the fructification of the earth, the birth of men—all these are wonders of nature which do not exist by themselves, but which have been subjected to positive laws by the Supreme Being, who has called them into life. That the grass of the meadow becomes wool on the back of the sheep, hair upon the back of the stag and the cow, feathers upon the fowls and geese—in all this we discover nothing miraculous. Yet they are real wonders, which differ from those related in the Bible in so far that we see them as accomplished facts, whilst the others are unnatural and are only based upon belief. We pass daily by innumerable wonders, like that of the grass of the meadow



and its different effects, without noticing them, just because they are natural truths.

The Christian Church rejects what it calls natural religion,—namely, the belief in one eternal God, and maintains that the so-called revealed religion—the belief in the unnatural and in miracles—is indispensable to the sanctification and the happiness of man. For this purpose she uses the alleged miracles, knowing that the majority of men are more accessible to what is mysterious and miraculous than to that which is natural and reasonable. They will find believers as long as men will not think for themselves, but will continue to accept blindly what has been said by other men hundreds of years ago.

Yet even to-day men will cling to the most unreasonable and unnatural doctrines of the Church, and call them miracles and believe in them, whilst they do not recognize much that is wonderful in nature, which is incomprehensible to them. They turn haughtily away from it and declare it a superstition. It is a curious phenomenon that men care less for God than for the saints and the devil.

The believing masses are longing, and always have longed, for miracles, and none have been announced which have not at once found believers. If the Bible had said an elephant had laid an egg and hatched it, and that the Holy Spirit had proceeded from it, the believing Christians would have accepted it, because it stands in the Bible. The number of those poor in spirit, who are always ready to believe everything which appears as a miracle, is still terribly large. Rationalists, as opposed to the orthodox, are those priests of the Church who, whilst acknowledging the unreasonableness of miracles, preach about them to the people; yet they do not torment them-



selves with all kinds of sophistry to explain and define that which is against reason, and to make it thus acceptable to their hearers. Among priests who have been active in such a manner there have been many honorable and excellent men; for instance, Schleiermacher, Herder and Neander, who were far removed from any intention of deceit. But however much they tried, they did not succeed in their endeavor, because they had not the courage to use their intellect, which at all times recognizes truth, and which would have told them that what is unnatural is impossible. They consulted the arguments and sophistry of their intellect in regard to the truth which their reason announced to them. Daily experience teaches us that if intellect alone is made the judge, it will lead to errors and false results.

The youngest school-boy is taught to consider those miracles which abound in the history of ancient nations as fables, but the miracles related in the Bible he must accept as facts and believe in them. When he reads of the sacrifice of Tphigenia, he is told that it is a fable, but the intended sacrifice of Isaac he is told is a truth. If he reads of Titans who attempted to storm the heavens, he is told it is mythology, and that Titans have never existed; but giants, as reported in IV. Moses xiii. 33, and V. Moses ii. 11 and iii. 13, he is told have existed, and even men, who are believed to have existed, attempted to build a tower which was to reach into heaven, in which they did not succeed because God descended from heaven and prevented them. If a school-boy were told that Lycurgus, Numa, Buddha, Mohammed, or any other law-giver had received his laws from heaven, he would not believe it; but he believes, and is compelled to believe, that Moses

received his laws, which God himself had written on two tablets of stone, from God's own hand.

We have already examined the miracles related in the Old Testament in the chapter entitled "The Bible," and it is scarcely necessary here to mention more of them. The miracles of the New Testament—the miracles which Jesus is said to have performed—are worthy imitations of the miraculous stories told in the Old Testament about Moses and the prophets Elijah and Elisha. These have been the models of the miracles ascribed to Jesus. Moses feeds the people in a miraculous manner with manna; in a similar way Jesus feeds five thousand people with a few loaves. The Red Sea yielded to the commands of Moses, and Jesus calmed the storm on the lake. Moses was transfigured on Mount Sinai, Jesus upon a mountain in Palestine. Moses disappears, nobody knows his grave, and legend makes him ascend into heaven; Jesus also ascended into heaven. Elijah and Elisha healed the sick, as also did Jesus. Elisha changed bad water into good, and Jesus changed water into wine. Elijah brings a dead child to life again as Jesus did the youth of Nain. The healing of the sick by Jesus was no miracle, according to the ideas of his time, for it was a popular belief that sickness was caused by evil spirits which entered into men. It was thought possible to expel these evil spirits and to heal the sick by pronouncing passages of sacred writing, before which the evil spirit would flee and leave the sick. Jesus himself confessed that different spirits had to be expelled by different means. When the disciples (Matthew xvii. 21) could not expel a demon, he taught them that this kind of evil spirit could only be expelled by prayer and fasting. Whilst the miracles of

to-day are based upon actual deceit and fraud, those related in the Bible are illusions caused by the defective knowledge of the laws of nature, by the belief in unnatural and supernatural things, and by superstition. It would be wrong to accuse those persons who have related these miracles of intentional deception and dishonest purposes. On the contrary, we have every reason to suppose that they really believed what they wrote. But there is no reason why we should believe to-day, after many centuries, and in an age of riper knowledge, that these miracles have taken place. If we were told to-day that a certain thing had taken place which is opposed to the laws of nature known to us, we should say it was impossible, and simply refuse to believe it. Perhaps we find an opportunity to inquire into the origin of this reported event, and we find that misunderstanding, exaggeration, or want of intelligence has disfigured a simple fact. In this manner we can explain many of the miracles reported to have been performed by Jesus, all the more so as many years had gone before anything relating to him was written down, during which tradition had the opportunity of changing natural events into miracles.

The belief in miracles may agree with doctrines invented by men and with the dogmas of the Church, but not with reason and true religion; and the present time is mature enough to accept the simple doctrine of the knowledge of God, and of truth and virtue, without additions which are adverse to the order of nature.

## The Priests.

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The priests, the pillars of the Christian Church, are considered by many people as superior beings, and better than the rest of mankind. They call themselves "Reverend," and consider that they are the mediators between God and man. Sinners themselves, they have assumed the power to remit the sins of others.

Without the authority of Jesus, and in imitation of the rites of the Old Testament of heathendom, a priesthood was gradually established in the Christian communion, which assumed the privilege of regulating every circumstance of human life. Humiliation of reason before belief, the limitation of the development of intellect, the propagation of belief in miracles, superstition, fears of the punishments of hell, and immovable centralization and submission to their will, these were the principal means to gain their ends. When Christianity became the religion of the State, when Christian priests became priests of the State, they suppressed by violent means all resistance against the belief which was supported by the State. Then began persecution by fire and sword—the instruments of the Inquisition. Liberty of opinion was to be exterminated, and torture, which hitherto had only been used for the slave, was also applied to other classes of the population.

This is the beginning of the Christian priesthood. Dr. E. L. Hagen, a man of great age, who has the experience of a long life, published a book a few years ago with the title "Guiding Stars," in which he classifies the Christian priests as follows :

"Firstly : Those *weak in intellect* who, with trouble and difficulty, have finished their study of Christian theology

exclusively, who consider it a hard task which they had to accomplish in order to secure a living, who after having passed their examination, throw away their tools and consider themselves free from the duty of penetrating deeper into science, or of progressing any further from the point at which they have arrived. They stand before us thoroughly assimilated with their dogmatic prejudices, thoroughly satisfied with their spiritual condition, powerless and unsympathetic.

“Secondly: Those who are *indolent*, who shun spiritual exertion in their love for comfort. They close their mind against all scientific occupation and pass by the steps of intellectual progress with indifference. They are satisfied with that which they consider a dogma of the Church; they reject everything which would cause spiritual exertion and which might disturb their habitual ease of mind.

“Thirdly: Those who are *afraid*, who recognize the necessity of reform, whose views, hopes and desires are directed towards this goal, but who are afraid of their superiors, through whose favor they desire to obtain a position which will bring them a better income, and who are compelled, on account of the care for the comfort of their families, to look silently and indifferently upon the present struggle between light and darkness.

“Fourthly: The *Hypocrites*, those who in spite of their own secret, better convictions, and for reasons which can easily be recognized, are in favor of continuing unchanged the present state of the Church, and do everything in their power to impede the intellectual progress in matters of religion. These are the Pharisees of to-day.

“Fifthly: The *Unconscientious*. The last mentioned

might be included in this class ; yet I would designate here those who are thoroughly aware of their all-important vocation,—to enlighten the people, to make them better, and to lead them to truth and virtue, and yet carelessly neglect their office. They ignore the sacred voice of their conscience, and are satisfied if they follow the requirements of the church to which they belong, so that they can be attacked neither by their own parishoners nor by the Church. A priest belonging to this class, who spurned the warning of his conscience, was not ashamed to say : ‘ I teach what my superiors have commanded me to teach, and if the people are led astray or neglected they are responsible for it, not I ; and I say to the Church, if it should ever disapprove of my conduct, as the High Priest said to Judas : “ What is that to us ? See thou to it.” ’

“ Lastly : Those who are altogether *incurable*, who have taken for their guidance the words of Augustine ‘ Credo, quia absurdum est,’—that is to say, I believe because it is absurd ; those who, full of their sacerdotal dogmatism, revile everything that is opposed to it, who look upon reason as an instrument of the devil, whose hearts are so dried up, so barren, so shriveled, that every attempt to elevate them is futile.”

Whoever has had experience of the world, and who has had the opportunity of observing carefully the position which priests occupy, must acknowledge that the above description contains much that is true ; but there is still another class of priests which, in order to be just, must not be overlooked. It consists of those honest men among Christian priests who honestly believe what they teach. It would be a great mistake, and a great wrong,



to suppose that all priests who still cling to the old dogmas are hypocrites. No : there are among them many honorable, faithful men, who are afraid to reflect only because they think it a sin to doubt and to shake the foundations of the old doctrine. We cannot refuse our respect for such men, even if we are opposed to their opinions ; for every honest conviction may claim the respect of the most decided opponent. In the course of my long life I have had frequent opportunities of conversing with Protestant and Catholic priests. Among them were men belonging to every denomination, some who belong to the most Orthodox class, and I have found among them many honorable, excellent men. But they were not good and honorable because they believed in the Christian faith, not because they belonged to a certain church or denomination, but because they felt and thought and acted in a humane spirit. The great feature of their conduct was not Christianity, but pure, noble humanity, because genuine humanity prevailed above Christianity ; they were not first Christians and then men, but first men and then Christians.

Without considering this last-named class, which forms an exception, let us consider for a moment the Christian priesthood in its general actions. We are best able to judge the spirit which rules over them, if we take priests of different denominations and let them speak for themselves. For this purpose we will quote a few of their opinions.

A Catholic priest in Allgau, in Bavaria, expressed himself a few years ago, in a sermon, as follows : “ We priests stand as high above the governments, emperors, kings, and princes of this world as the heavens are above the



earth. Kings and princes are as inferior to us priests as lead is to the finest and purest gold. Angels and archangels are far beneath the priests, for we, as representatives of God, can remit sins, which angels and archangels never could do. We stand above the mother of God, for she has borne Christ only once; but we priests create him every day. Yea, we priests stand, as it were, above God, for He is at our service at all times and in all places, and must descend from heaven at our command when we consecrate mass. God indeed has created the world with the words: 'Let there be,' but we priests can create God himself with three little words."

The following is a quotation from a sermon which Anton Haering, an assistant priest, preached in the parish church of Ebersberg: "When Christ endowed us with the power of absolution, he endowed the priesthood with a power which is terrible even to hell, which Lucifer himself cannot resist,—a power which reaches into the immeasurable space of eternity, where every earthly power finds its limits and its end,—a power which can break fetters which, through sin, have been riveted for eternity. Yes, indeed, this power of remitting sins makes of the priest a second God, for in reality God alone can forgive sins. And yet even this is not the height of priestly power. Their power reaches higher still. *God himself must be subservient to the priest.* How so? When the priest steps to the altar to perform the sacrifice of the mass, Jesus Christ, who sits at the right hand of the Father, rises from his throne to descend on earth at the request of the priest. Hence, scarcely has a priest begun the consecration, when Christ, surrounded by the heavenly host, descends from heaven to the earth, on the altar of the sacrifice, and

at the command of the priest he changes the bread and wine into his sacred flesh and blood, and is lifted up and carried in the hands of the priest, even of the most sinful and unworthy. Indeed such power surpasses that of the highest princes of heaven ; yes, the power of the Queen of heaven."

What unfathomable pride ! what madness !

In the fifth number of a Protestant Church magazine—"Communications of the Evangelical Society of Germany," for the year 1876—a sermon is reprinted in which the following passage occurs: "The resurrection of Jesus, in which his earthly body was transfigured into the incorruptability and splendor of God, is a security that the bodies of his believers, whom he calls his brothers and sisters, will be renewed and made like unto him. \* \* \* See, the faithful gains from the transfigured body of Jesus, from the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood, in the word and in the sacrament, in the assumption of his god-like nature in the holy spirit, an inner spiritual body ; and his soul gains a spiritual shelter which does not leave it in the hour of death and which remains its abode. As soon as the earthly shell leaves us, we are surrounded by this abode, this heavenly home, which now reveals itself and becomes visible. The physical body is an essential part of man. Man consists of spirit, soul and body, created in the image of God ; and it is the triumph of Christ's work of redemption that he transforms our corruptible abode, our abject, humiliated body, and takes it into splendor. Until then the soul, even in paradise, is in a state of expectation. The soul longs for its body, for the resurrection and transformation of its body."

Was the man who preached this himself conscious of what he said? Can such nonsense edify men and lead them to good? And yet such a sermon is reprinted in a journal which is published in the interest of propagating Christianity.

The well-known traveler, Gerstaecker, relates in his "Australian Travels," vol. .ii. p. 203, that he heard in Tanunda a Lutheran clergyman, Kavel, express himself in a sermon as follows: "Those who really act according to the word of God, but have not the right faith, be they ever so good and pleasing to God in their actions, are hopelessly lost and will go to the devil. Yes, God will hate such men all the more on account of their good deeds, because he looks upon this as a kind of hypocrisy, because they do not have the right faith." Is it possible to imagine greater nonsense?

In January, 1879, a Congress for Home Mission was held in Bielefeld, in Westphalia, on which occasion the question of homes for children was discussed. One of the clergymen present, Mr. Bramesfeld, referring to the employment of wet-nurses, said as follows: "On moral principles, nobody should employ a fallen woman; indeed, if a new-born child cannot be sustained by artificial food or by its mother, it would be better to sacrifice it as Abraham offered to sacrifice Isaac." This preacher, who advocated the murder or the starvation of a child, was also a Christian priest.

It is not only Protestant and Catholic priests who spread such doctrines, which are against humanity, which are unreasonable and hurtful, but the priests of all countries and of all creeds and sects. With a few honorable exceptions they are all alike, and the difference between

Protestant and Catholic priests is generally only this, that the latter owes obedience to the Pope and derives authority from him, whilst among the Protestants every one would like to be a pope. Both strive after unconditional and unlimited power, not only in religious matters but in every condition of human life. Therefore, ye men, if you wish to elevate yourselves to that which is common to all religions, to the belief in one Supreme Being, if you wish to follow the teachings of the great philosopher of Nazareth, then you must cease to sing the praise of the priests and declare to them that they have no right to intrude their dogmas into any of your own affairs. In order to obtain a purified view of religion you must, above all things, free yourself from priestly influence upon your belief and thoughts. Do not underrate the power of the priesthood. The history of all centuries gives proof of their baneful influence and their fanaticism; and if it does not show so glaringly in our times as in former centuries, it nevertheless exists still, and has only changed its form. If in former times, with the cross in his uplifted hand, he preached a crusade for the destruction of those who believed differently, he obeys to-day the maxim, "Gentle as the dove, but cunning as the serpent." The aim is the same,—unlimited power over mankind. These gentlemen call themselves pious, and they try by outward appearance to present piety; but the really pious are only a few. The truly pious is no hypocrite, but looks up with a cheerful heart to his God; nor does he strive after power over others, but is an apostle of liberty.

How this is understood by Christian priests was recently proved at a large meeting of Protestant clergymen. On

the 25th of May, 1883, the Evangelical Luthern Synod of Wisconsin held its meeting at Milwaukee. There were present delegates from forty-six parishes—eighty-six clergymen and twenty-six school teachers. The following resolutions were accepted at this meeting: *No. 1.* “The Holy Scriptures, as the revealed word of God, are the *only and perfectly sufficient* source, and the *only* rule and standard of all sound doctrine.” *No. 2.* “For this reason the Holy Scriptures should not only be studied with heartfelt thanks to God, but should also be accepted with reverence *as the only truth which is binding on our conscience.*” *No. 3.* “*Those who let their reason be mistress over the Holy Scriptures must go astray; they should accept them humbly, and with the obedience of faith.*” At this meeting, which defied all reason, the highest gift of God, eighty-six Christian clergymen were present. We see that even to-day Christian priests strive to place reason beneath blind faith. Men must not reflect on what they read, but accept it blindly, and renounce all reason. Can it be wondered that the great masses of the people remain ignorant? Truly, as we read these things, we may wonder if we are living in the nineteenth century.

The following facts will show the spirit of many of the Christian priests of to-day. One of the best-known preachers of Berlin, Knaak, maintains to-day, four hundred years after Copernicus, and three hundred years after Galileo, basing his assertions on the Bible, that the earth does not revolve around the sun, but the sun around the earth!

A professor of theology in Boun tried to prove that Balaam's ass had really talked like a man. As a proof of his assertion he said that Balaam's ass could have talked as well as the serpent in Eden.

Johann Grosse, in his monthly magazine, *The Chemnitz Lutheran*, published an article under the heading, "The Alleged Motion of the Earth," in which the following passage occurs: "That the sun moves is not a human doctrine, but is reality and truth. But that the earth should move is a supposition which has not yet been proved, and which arises from hatred of the Bible and of God. The astronomer has not yet been born who, by means of exact science, has been able to establish this. The ungodly world will perish before it sees such a day; for such a proof is as impossible as a falsehood told by God. That the earth is immovable, and that the sun moves in reality, and not only in appearance, is taught by the Holy Spirit in the following words: "Thou hast established the earth and it abideth." Psalm cxix. 90. "Which (the sun) is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it." Psalm xix. 5 and 6.

If the above gentleman maintains that the earth does not revolve around the sun, an English theologian goes even further, and maintains that the earth is not a globe, but a flat surface, the center of which is London. He also declares it to be a falsehood that the distance of the earth from the sun is many millions of miles; he says the sun is not more than one hundred English miles above the earth. In order that his wisdom might not be lost, the learned gentleman has drawn a map illustrating his theory, to which he has added an explanatory description to be distributed in schools. He has even thought it necessary to send a copy of his new map of the world to the Geographical Society of Berlin. A man of equally high

scientific culture is the Rev. C. A. Johnson, of Hamilton, Canada, who, in 1882, delivered a lecture in Syracuse, New York, on the subject: "The Sun Moves." In this lecture he expressed himself as follows: "Astronomy maintains that the earth moves and the sun stands still; and that is where I differ from astronomy, though I am not prepared to say that if it were not for astronomy we would know little, if anything, of the heavenly bodies. The great luminary that rules the day, I am prepared to say, is round, though I can't agree with those who say the world is a globe. Astronomers say the sun is 91,000,000\* miles away. How do they know? Have they measured it? This talk about the distance between the sun and the earth is about as reasonable as the rest of the talk of the scientists. How did they pace it off?"

Here he paused for a reply, but the stillness was unbroken.

"Now," resumed Mr. Johnson, "these astronomers who say the sun has no motion don't know anything more about it than I do, and I say it has. If you take a telescope and look at the dark spots on the sun you will see that they move. That shows it has motion. The Bible offers satisfactory proof on this question. Let us turn to Malachi and see what he says. Don't he speak of the sun rising and going down! How could it, I want to know, if it didn't have motion? Look at Joshua! Didn't he want the sun to stand still? If it was not moving, how could it stand still? Perhaps some of my scientific friends will answer that. Besides, if the world is round and revolves, we must be standing on our heads part of the time. I don't remember any such occasion, do you?"

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\*This "reverend" gentleman must have other sources of knowledge than the "orator" mentioned before.



They tell us the earth is round. I don't believe it. The earth is flat and has four corners, that's what I believe, for the Bible says the wind comes from the four corners."

The Rev. John Jasper, in Richmond, maintains stoutly that the earth is flat and square, and that at sunrise the sun actually ascends and at sunset it actually descends.

And such people, who are entirely ignorant of the first elements of science, which are familiar to every school-boy, are permitted to preach from Christian pulpits! Can we be astonished at the ignorance which prevails in many circles as regards religion, morality and knowledge of truth?

How contemptible is that pride which inflates, with few exceptions, all Christian priests so much that they consider themselves above other men, and call themselves "Reverend." Christian humility is on their lips, but pride is in their hearts,—pride at which one might feel inclined to smile if it did not carry great disadvantage and even danger to every generation. And this danger really does exist, for, instead of being teachers and friends, advisers and comforters of their congregations, the priesthood claims to be a privileged class, and strive after power to keep mankind in blind obedience to their unreasonable dogmas. And how successful they are can be seen everywhere, particularly in little towns and villages which are remote from the highways of civilization. And men submit patiently to this pride and desire for power. There would be some sense in this if the Christian priests were men of eminent intellect; but quite the contrary is the case. The majority of the priests of all Christian denominations, in fearful ignorance of their serious tasks, are only blind followers of old traditions,

without independent knowledge of the true character and exigencies of genuine religion. They move in their habitual circuit, and many among them do not think it even necessary to give their congregations the example of a moral life.

Wherever Christian priests have exercised prevailing influences, spiritual pride, selfishness and opposition to intellectual development have prevailed. They want everything for themselves; and the Church which they represent, or rather, with which they identify themselves, does not permit independent thought. Everything belongs to the Church, of which they consider themselves the center, and which they uphold as the Alpha and Omega of all thought and reflection.

The priests, no matter to what denomination they belong, move everything to maintain themselves in their worldly position, and they know well enough that it would be in danger by enlightenment and progress. For this reason they strive with all their power to impede intellectual advancement, and try to gain control of schools and other institutions of learning. And because they are aware of this they are opposed to non-sectarian schools, to progress and liberal education, and to all scientific enlightenment. How far they can go in this endeavor we find in the story of the Life of Heinecke. When this philanthropist introduced the instruction of the deaf and dumb into Germany to procure for these unfortunate beings the blessings of speech, it was the Christian priests who worked against him, and who declared that it was wrong to give speech to these people, who had been, by the will of God, born deaf and dumb. The priests have always arrogated to themselves the prerogative of

deciding what was right and what was wrong in science, what was good or evil in morals, what was orthodox or heretical in matters of belief; and they have always tried their best to teach men that all are sinners. In this way they have maintained themselves in power and made helpless slaves of thousands of their fellow-creatures.

Their influence upon women has been particularly dangerous. Women do not, as a rule, follow the dictates of reason as much as their feelings and their passions. On account of this they are more subject to enthusiasm and priestcraft than men, who, with a little education, let reason and judgment determine their conduct. If women will recognize this fact, if they will understand the subordinate position which they occupy towards the priests, they will be less inclined to be influenced by them. How many happy marriages, in which husband and wife were of different denominations, have been made miserable by the interference of priests. How much happiness has been destroyed by denominational contention which has been stirred up by such interference.

What is the position which priests occupy in political life? In all times and in all ages we find them as the devoted servants of the existing government. To-day, they preach and pray for the monarchy or the empire, the king or emperor; and to-morrow, if a revolution should take place, and a republican be substituted for the monarchical government, they would preach and pray for the republic. At all times they have been the servants of existing power.

Since the origin of Christianity the priests have encouraged and supported fanaticism. They have driven mankind to blood and murder in spite of the doctrine of Jesus, that men should live together like brethren, and all

this has been done, so they say, for the greater glory of God and of religion. They have stirred up bloody and destructive wars and fanatical persecution, in which neither old nor young were spared. Who was it that caused the wars of the Crusades from the eleventh to the thirteenth century? Who stirred up the persecution of the Waldenses and the Huguenots in France, and the Albigenses in Piedmont, where hundreds of thousands of men were sacrificed? Who flooded the Netherlands with blood? Who caused the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572, in which forty thousand people, men, women and children, were cruelly murdered? Who carried the cross, the symbol of Christianity, before the butcher Pizarro; who blessed his arms when he slew the first inhabitants of America like herds of cattle? Who originated the terrible institution of the Inquisition, under which hundreds of thousands of innocent people were executed with terrible torments, all for the sake of Christianity? Who has kindled the innumerable stakes at which many great and noble men suffered terrible death?

All this has been the work of Christian priests who called themselves the apostles of the doctrine of Jesus, the doctrine of love. These deeds of horror belong to a period long gone by, yet they are an eloquent and fearful testimony against the Christian priesthood. To-day such deeds of horror are no longer possible, yet the spirit which called them into life has not died out, and many a Calvin is living among us who would send Servetus to the stake. Have we not seen quite recently, to the disgrace of our century, Jewish persecutions in Berlin, the capital of Germany, with the court-preacher Stoecker leading the van? We cannot read the history of the development

of Christian priesthood without a feeling of profound grief, without accusing the priesthood of great sins against the teachings of Jesus and against humanity.

The Christian priests would like to make Trappist monks of all men, would have them renounce all joys of this life, and would make them spend their existence in prayer and penitence only. But the world is not a Trappist monastery, and God does not wish it to be so. Like dissatisfied parents who begrudge their children every pleasure, the priests become embittered when they see men enjoy the gifts which God has given them for their benefit. Under the pretence of keeping holy the Sabbath day they take no heed of the fact that man, after six days of labor, requires rest and recreation, lest he should degenerate and lose every joy of life. They wish to drive us into church *only* on Sunday; they would deprive us of every innocent pleasure, of instructive reading; they would confine us to the Bible, the hymn-book or some religious tract. By their temperance laws, which really only encourage drunkenness, they wish to deprive men of the enjoyment of a glass of wine in the company of friends in the open air. They forbid the enjoyment of music or of harmless dancing, as if they were immoral and ungodly. If these priests would only consider that by depriving men of innocent pleasures they do not further religious feelings, but on the contrary, work against them. If they would only follow the example of Jesus at the wedding of Cana, where he was joyful with the joyful, and comforted those who were sad.

As regards the morality of the priests themselves, we need only consult history to find an answer to our questions. Pope Gregory VII., in the eleventh century,

enforced the celibacy of priests, by which crimes of all kinds were encouraged. Pope John XXIII. was accused before the Council of Constance with having committed adultery with his own brother's wife, and of having dishonored more than three hundred nuns. Pope Alexander VI. was accused of incontinence, incest and of unnatural crimes. So that Adrian VI., who formed an honorable exception, was compelled to declare at the Diet of Nuremberg, in 1522, "We know that in this Holy See hideous crimes have been committed for some time. We cannot wonder that the disease has extended from the head to the other parts of the body, from the popes to the prelates." It was a general practice in those days for priests to keep concubines, for which privilege they had to pay taxes. One priest had seventeen illegitimate children in one village, another had seventy concubines. The Bishop of Siege had sixty-five illegitimate children. The convents were the abode of prostitute women; infanticide was the order of the day; incest among the priesthood was so common that a decree was issued in which priests were forbidden from having their mothers or sisters in their house. Fortunately, this state of things has improved in our days; but, even now, there are many priests who belong to the penitentiary rather than to the church. The *New York Tribune*, a paper which certainly cannot be accused of animosity against Christianity and the Church, published, in 1857, an article on the increasing immorality of the clergy, in which the following passage occurs: "In all the bankruptcies of our days there is none greater than the moral bankruptcy of the clergy; one look into the daily papers is sufficient to prove the truth of this assertion. We read every day of the most atrocious sexual crimes



which have been committed by reverend gentlemen. In this respect there is no difference among the various denominations. If we consider that only the tenth part of these outrages come to light,—we need not give any reason for this,—we may form an idea of the demoralization of our clergy, a demoralization which is not behind that of the Middle Ages, not behind that described in the *Decameron* of Boccaccio.” As a remedy for this evil, the *New York Tribune* could propose nothing else but the advice that no clergyman should be allowed to speak to women or girls except in the presence of a third party. We do not know whether this was meant seriously or only as an expression of bitter scorn.

A few years later, in 1879, Doctor Bartlett, of Dartmouth College, a man whom nobody will accuse of being an enemy of Christianity or the Church, wrote, in a monthly magazine, *The Congregationalist*, that the Church ought to be greatly interested in the general conduct of the clergy. The following is an extract from this article: “It has become possible for reckless clerical adventurers to range, almost unhindered, from place to place, corrupting and harassing the flock. A student was expelled from a western theological seminary for vulgarity, obscenity and falsehood; yet he went directly to New England, was ordained, and made a pastor. A dissolute young pastor in New England was formally turned out of the ministry; but within a year he was in charge of a church in a distant State. An Englishman came over with forged credentials, and almost destroyed a Vermont church that employed him; but, as often as exposed, he found new pulpits. A Michigan preacher fled from Michigan to escape a trial, and was immediately engaged by a Minnesota



church, where his 'low-lived deportment' got him again into trouble. A New England church in a large city engaged a pastor whose private life was so bad that a council had refused to settle him."

This is the testimony of an honorable man, which throws a very bad light upon the clergy. There are, as I have said above, many honorable and upright men, but there is also much chaff among the wheat, and even many poisonous weeds.

I have in my possession the names of over two hundred and fifty clergymen who have committed crimes of every kind. This list has been made up from information given in newspapers and other publications, and furnishes convincing as well as ample proof of the depravity among ministers of the Christian Church. It embraces the following crimes, which were punished in various ways, ranging from a short term of imprisonment in the penitentiary to life-long confinement in the State prisons and capital punishment, viz: Defraudation, 3; Forgery, 17; Extortion, 2; Ill-treatment, 10; Swindling, 10; Calumniation, 1; Embezzlement, 13; Drunkenness, 10; Theft, 20; Horse-stealing, 1; Highway robbery, 1; Church robbery, 1; Immorality, 33; Abandonment of wife and children, 7; Seduction, 31; Unchastity, 19; Rape, 5; Adultery, 13; Bigamy, 15; Abortion, 3; Incest, 1; Suicide, 18; Incendiarism, 4; Perjury, 2; Attempt at murder, 3; Murder 23.

This is indeed a fearful list, embracing all kinds of crimes, and its material—with the exception of a few cases—having been collected during the last few years only from such sources as accidentally came under my notice, it has by no means any claim to completeness; or,

in other words, it comprises only a part of the crimes committed during a limited space of time by clergy men belonging to different Christian denominations, viz. : Catholics and Protestants, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Lutherans, etc. These criminals were clergymen of all grades, up to the highest dignitaries of the Church, men who pretended to be expounders and teachers of religion and examples of an exemplary life for their congregations.

It should not be said that among the many thousands of priests one cannot wonder that there are some black sheep. This may apply to society in general, but it is no excuse for the crimes committed by the priests. The priests, as the teachers of religion, should be *pure*. They may have their weaknesses, like other men; yet there is a vast difference between a weakness, which may not harm anybody, and a crime, which is directed against the life and property of others, and is apt to destroy the happiness of fellow-creatures.

And what must be the effect of such examples upon the congregations? Must they not lose all respect for religion and become depraved themselves if they see such people in the pulpits? And are not the priests themselves hypocrites if they preach to their congregations and pray with them with their hearts full of such evil? What an example for the congregations! Truly, we are perfectly justified to ask ourselves the question, If we see such fruit on a living tree (the priests), what can we expect from a barren tree (the congregation)? If Christianity is revealed so little in its ministers, how can it warm the hearts of others?

In the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, Jesus, speaking

of the Pharisees, intends to speak of such hypocritical priests who carry such an outward appearance of holiness, and yet carry such evil in their hearts. To them apply the words of Jesus, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; who appear pious before men and carry evil in your hearts."

We will now give a few paragraphs upon the American clergy from the Rev. E. E. Guild, who was for many years a Protestant clergyman, but who was induced to abandon the profession after he no longer believed it was right for him to follow it. We quote his own words:

"Undoubtedly the priesthood, like all the other learned professions, is composed of good and bad men. Doubtless the clergy are no better, nor any worse, than the average of men. With them the business of theological and religious teaching is a profession and a means of obtaining a livelihood. Before they enter upon their work they must, before God and man, make solemn professions of faith in a certain creed, to which they are expected to adhere and defend during life. On their doing this their living depends. They have a pecuniary interest at stake. The creed must be maintained, missionary work must be done, contributions must be raised, revival excitements must be gotten up, converts must be made. They are conservative in their tendencies, opposed to all innovation, tenacious and bigoted in their opinions, and blind to all newly-discovered truth. They can seldom see the word *truth*, because with them it is covered by a dollar. Their occupation leads them into the practice of conscious or unconscious hypocrisy. They assume a character before the people that they by no means maintain in their families, or when in company with each other. However

grave, sanctimonious and circumspect they may appear in public, when assembled in company by themselves they are the most jolly of all. They can then crack their jokes, tell funny stories, relate smutty anecdotes and indulge in low gossips to an extent unequaled by any, except professional libertines. They denounce human selfishness, and are of all men the most selfish; declaim against avarice, and are mercenary and avaricious; preach against pride, fashion and love of the world, and yet are as proud, as servile imitators of fashion, and manifest as much of the love of the world as other men. They insist on the necessity of self-denial, but think themselves entitled to the most comfortable places, the best bits, the choicest dainties, the lion's share of all the good things of life. They profess to be awfully concerned and anxious for the welfare of poor sinners, but their sleek, smooth, well-to-do appearance gives no indication of excessive anxiety. They claim that men, in their natural state, are totally depraved, and yet, in this country at least, they profess to believe in a free government, founded on the principle that the people have a right to govern themselves,—an inconsistency so glaring that it makes us suspicious of their sincerity.

“The art of proselyting they understand to perfection. This is an important part of their business. However ignorant they may be on all other subjects, this they perfectly well understand. They are in possession of all the accumulated experience of a long line of predecessors extending through all of the past ages. They know human nature well, and how to take advantage of its weaknesses. They make their appeals to the superstitious, selfish hopes and fears of ignorant men, and have what Archimedes only wanted, another world on which to plant their machinery.

It is no wonder that in almost all past time they have moved this at their pleasure. They task all their ingenuity and eloquence in describing the beauties of a heaven about which they know nothing, and the terrors of a hell of which they are equally ignorant. The one they promise as a reward to all who embrace their doctrines, the other they threaten as a punishment to be inflicted on all who do not. In this way they may succeed, perhaps, in luring some and entrancing others; but no man was ever made really any better by being actuated by such selfish considerations. They condemn human selfishness, and yet cultivate and strengthen it by making constant appeals to it. They are the greatest beggars in the world. Their horseleech cry of give, give, can be heard on the mountains and in the valleys, in the public streets and in the churches. At every public meeting, ostensibly for the worship of God, the contribution-box is passed around, and the people are entreated, in God's name, to give. The people are assured that if they will give, God will restore to them four-fold, but not one of them will stand sponsor for the fulfillment of the promise or guarantee the refunding of the gift in case it is not. In a thousand varieties of ways vast sums of money are raised by these men, which goes to help the warring sects to vie with each other in building costly churches and to support a class of useless drones in the human hive.

“The same envies and jealousies that exist among the members of other learned professions exist among them. They will unscrupulously resort to measures to supplant a brother in an advantageous situation, or in the esteem and affections of the people, which lawyers and physicians scorn to adopt, and have too great a sense of honor and

manhood to think of adopting. If one of their number happens to become convinced of the erroneousness of his creed, and has independence and moral courage enough to avow his honest opinions, the rest will pounce on him like a hawk upon a chicken. They will pursue him with misrepresentations and slander, hurl at him the epithets of "infidelity," "emissary of Satan," enemy of religion ; call him a Judas, a renegade, an apostate ; ostracize him from society if they can,—and all to counteract his influence in opposition to their sectarian views. On the other hand, if one of their profession is accused of any crime, the rest of the fraternity will gather around him, form a solid phalanx, and shield him from exposure if they can. The peculiar position occupied by these men brings them into close relation to the female sex. They, knowing that women are more susceptible to religious as well as superstitious influence than men, regard them as their right-hand weapon of offensive and defensive war. They rely mainly on them to further their designs. Women, educated to believe that they must depend on men for support and protection, will inevitably be inclined to look up to the clergy for religious guidance and instruction. This brings them into frequent and familiar intimacy with that class of men. What has been the result ? Not only are our sectarian churches made up principally of women and children, but the history of the priesthood in all ages and countries proves that by no other class of professional men have so many crimes against female virtue been committed as by them.

"These men claim, too, that by some mysterious supernatural process they have experienced such a change of nature, such a regeneration of character, such a sanctifica-



tion of mind and heart as fits them to be the mouth-pieces of God, and the leaders and instructors of mankind. But of what use is it for them to pretend to any superior sanctity, when all intelligent men know, and all the world ought to know, that they 'are men of like passions as others,' that they have the same appetites, passions, desires, faults and foibles that all men have? The criminal records of the country prove that in proportion to their numbers no class of educated men furnish a greater number of the inmates of our jails and prisons than the clergy."

The Christian priests do not spare any means or artifice to extort money from their congregations and from the public, and to fill their churches,—means which any respectable man of business would hesitate to employ. In 1881, a "Religious Business" was established in Chicago, which, according to a circular distributed among the clergy, had in stock many hundred nicely-printed sermons which they offered at the cheap rate of thirty cents apiece, pledging themselves that no two clergyman in the same neighborhood should receive the same sermons. In the same year a religious newspaper in Boston, *The Church Mirror* offered a revolver as a premium for new subscribers—real revolvers, real weapons of murder. For four subscribers, one revolver; for nine subscribers, a better kind of revolver; for fifteen subscribers, the very best class, nickle-plated and rose-wood handle—in every respect a first-class article. Does such a publication, by its offer of revolvers, hope to further religious sentiment and love for the Church?

It is revolting to look at the texts chosen by many Christian preachers for their sermons to attract the people to their churches. In one number of a Brooklyn



newspaper, of November, 1882, the following texts and subjects were announced for religious discourse. Dr. Scudder was to preach on "The Demon in the Swine;" Dr. Cuyler, on "The Evening Wolves;" Mr. Canfield, on "A Search for Saints," and in the evening by the same minister, on "The Middle Verse of the Bible and its Bearing on Election;" Mr. Breckenridge, on "Money, Good and Bad;" Mr. Parker, on "The Christian's Political Duty;" Mr. Morse, on "Temperance and Politics;" Mr. Chadwick, on "Shakespeare," and so forth.

In September, 1883, the State Temperance Society of Iowa sent a circular to all the Christian preachers in the State, requesting them to preach on a certain Sunday for the passage of a political law, a prohibition law, and at the same time to take up a collection, the proceeds of which should go to the campaign fund of a certain political party, and many of the preachers did so; they did not blush at degrading the pulpit by political controversy and the house of God to a murderer's den."

During the same month Dr. Houghton, at New Haven, Conn., delivered a sermon on the murder of a certain Rose Ambler, openly stamping as the murderer a man who had not been tried and convicted of the crime. He did so in the following words: "My guess is, and I declare it boldly, that Rose Ambler's pretended lover was Rose Ambler's murderer. My theory is that Lewis killed this girl in his barn, and under cover of the darkness carried her to the place where the body was found." What idea of the sacredness of the pulpit has a preacher who uses it for the purpose of exciting public feeling against one who at most was only suspected of crime, and might be wholly innocent?

Is it not indeed a degradation of the pulpit when it is abused by such sensational rubbish, instead of edifying the congregations, to speak of all kinds of subjects which have nothing to do with religion? And what can be the effect which they have upon the hearers? We certainly cannot be astonished at what frequently happens in America,—that the congregation laughs at something which the preacher has said, or expresses its approbation by loud applause.

It is equally revolting to see the invitations and the promises of warm reception which are held out to attract hearers. We find announcements like these in the daily newspapers: Everybody welcome; all invited; no collection; sinners come; splendid singing; seats free; ushers in attendance; attentive ushers; gentlemanly ushers; strangers politely shown to their seats; strangers shown to the best seats, etc., etc. Are these not precisely the same means by which a tradesman of the inferior class tries to attract customers? Does it not remind us of the ready-made clothes dealers, who almost drag the passer-by into their open shops? And is it not of the greatest injury to the Church, if the service of God, which ought to elevate mankind, is dragged down to the level of ordinary business? There are other clergymen who make a special business of baptisms and marriages, and advertise themselves for that purpose in the daily newspapers. We should not be astonished to see in the papers announcements like the following: "The cheapest and best baptisms and marriages in the city are performed by the Rev. A." "Before you go anywhere else for baptisms and marriages, call on the Rev. B, who will do it better and cheaper than any other minister in the city." Do not the

words of Jesus, "My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves," apply to such priests? The clergy, as a rule, in ordinary life, oppose violently lotteries of all kinds; yet they make an exception when it is a question of establishing lotteries for the benefit of the Church. There were, quite recently, different lotteries in Germany for the erection of churches; and at the fairs which are held here, in America, for church purposes, we almost invariably find lotteries established to dispose of the articles which have not been bought previously. In such cases, where the Church gains a direct benefit, the old saying, "Circumstances alter cases," comes into application. We are reminded here of the old story of the German peasant who complained that he received a different measure from that which was given to the nobleman, and who received the reply, "Yes, that is quite a different thing."

The Mexican priests have invented a very peculiar kind of lottery,—a lottery to win souls from purgatory. Several thousand tickets for such a purgatorial lottery are sold, at the price of two or more *reals*. The player writes the name of some deceased relative or friend on his ticket, and those whose names appear on the tickets which are drawn are then transferred from purgatory into paradise. The clergy know well enough that by this stupendous superstition a rich revenue is annually brought into their exchequer. The income of the Mexican clergy amounts annually to over twenty million dollars, and good care is taken that this magnificent income is not in any very great degree lessened. But enough of such vileness.

Let us now briefly regard the actual faith of the majority of the priesthood. Do they really believe what

they preach? In the March number, 1879, of the *Princeton Rev. w.*, there is an article on the subject by Rev. Phillips Brooks, of Boston, in which the following passage occurs: "A large acquaintance with clerical life has led me to think that almost any company of clergymen, gathering together and talking freely to each other, will express opinions which would greatly surprise, and, at the same time, greatly relieve, the congregations who ordinarily listen to those ministers. \* \* \* How many men in the ministry to-day believe in the doctrine of verbal inspiration which our fathers held? \* \* \* How many of us hold that the everlasting punishment of the wicked is a clear and certain truth of revelation?" And Mr. Brooks, who is an honorable man, entreats his clerical brethren to show themselves in their true and honest character before their congregations. But how few of them will follow his advice, and how many of them will remain hypocrites!

But there are honorable and truthful men among the Christian priests who will not and cannot dissemble; who, when they have arrived at the conclusion that their conscience is no longer in harmony with the doctrine which they preach, cheerfully and publicly declare their change of opinion. We have had, of late years, several such honorable examples, among others the Rev. George Chainey, of Evansville, and the Rev. Mr. Slicer, of the Congregational Church in Brooklyn. The latter expresses himself as follows about the position which some of his colleagues occupy towards the Church. Among themselves, he says, they agree with him in thinking that the life has gone out of the orthodoxy they profess and assume to preach; but they dare not make the admission

in public. They therefore content themselves with avoiding any discussion of the old dogmas in their sermons, and carefully abstain from giving expression in the pulpit to their honest opinions of them, lest they shock their congregations, and so imperil their livelihood. "They have their livings to earn and their families to support," says Mr Slicer, "but I am young, strong and healthy. I can earn my living, and I cannot conceal my conscientious convictions."

There are, no doubt, many Christian priests who are only wanting in courage to express their convictions in such an open and honorable way. How many pulpits would be empty if all who no longer believe what they preach would make a public declaration of such a fact, and, if everybody who now calls himself a Christian, but no longer believes in Christian dogmas, and, either setting them aside altogether or interpreting them after their own fashion, would leave the Christian congregation, how many churches would be empty? And how much nobler and more sublime would Christian life then appear?

The minister ought to be a pattern of religion, unselfish and useful life, and the leader of the congregation. He should be unpretending and modest, noble and useful in thoughts and actions. The vocation of a priest is sacred and of extreme importance; and if they, who have always exercised, and still exercise, a powerful influence upon their fellow-creatures, used it for the welfare of mankind, and thus fulfilled their task, there would be less selfishness, less ungodliness and less crime, and more love to our fellow-creatures, more virtue, more good and noble actions would combine to make the world better and

happier. How much good could these thousands of priests have done since Christianity was established ! How many blessings could they have conferred upon mankind ! How they could have made them better and happier, if, instead of teaching unreasonable dogmas about the personality of Jesus, they had tried to spread his sublime doctrines, and had tried to lead men to God ; how much crime and misery they would have prevented ; how they would have advanced civilization ; and to what a high and noble position they would have brought the world.

The number of priests who, from habit or from fear of losing their position and their little income, day after day, preach dogmas which they themselves have recognized as erroneous, but who are too weak to follow the voice of their conscience, is beyond all calculation. And great are the struggles which such a man has to endure. He knows and feels that that which he preaches is no longer his conviction ; and the thought of what he could do, as a priest, if he followed his own conscience, must be predominant in him. All exertions to reconcile his conscience with that which he publicly announces must be futile. The straight road in this case, as in every other, is the only right one, which, in spite of all obstacles, leads alone to contentment and true happiness.

History teaches us that from the earliest existence of Christianity there have been men who, animated by the courage of their faith, willingly suffered death at the stake for the sake of their convictions. They deserve our utmost admiration, inasmuch as these convictions had their foundation in religion, the greatest boon man possesses. It is true, there is much that is impure and

unholy in the Christian priesthood of the present day, but it is reasonable to presume that, among the Christian clergy of to-day, there may be many who, after earnest and sincere reflection, and impelled by the dictates of their conscience and by the strength of their conviction, may feel themselves driven in future to preach the sublime and pure doctrine of love which Jesus has left to us, in place of the obsolete dogmas invented by men, which they have preached until to-day.

The times when the stake and martyrdom threatened Christianity have gone by, and he who preaches the pure doctrine of love is no longer in danger of his life. At the most, for a short time, he risks the loss of his income. But should such a petty care prevent honorable men from declaring openly their innermost convictions? The merit of those who gain the victory in such a battle cannot be praised too highly, for the large masses of those whom dogmatism has driven out of the Church, and who, together with Christianity, have rejected religion altogether, would return. The churches would not be able to contain these, if the true words of love were preached to them—words which are based on the belief in one Supreme Being, which are the foundation of humanity.

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### The Missionaries.

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The system of Christian missions is based upon the fallacious idea that the happiness and salvation of mankind depend upon the belief in Christian dogmas, and that he who is not baptized is doomed to eternal damnation. It cannot be denied that the missionaries have done a great deal of good in teaching savage nations agriculture and



various trades ; but they have done them no good from a religious or moral point of view. If they had preached to them the one Supreme Being, the all-loving Father of men, they would have caused great blessings ; but they taught them a fanatical doctrine of Christianity, an avenging and punishing God, who visits the sins of the fathers until the third and fourth generation ; and it has been repeatedly proved that the so-called conversions have, in many cases, only been temporary and of a very superficial nature.

How much misery the Christian missionaries have brought into the world, how their actions have been animated by desire for power only, how they have caused war and bloodshed, has been particularly shown in the history of the South Sea Islands, where a race of happy and contented people dwelt for centuries until the Christian missionaries made their appearance. The Sandwich Islands have often been held up by the promoters of missions as a bright example of the effects of their activity. And what has been the result ? The first census of the islands was taken about ten years after the American missionaries had begun their work, when it was found that the population amounted to about one hundred and thirty thousand people. According to the last census this population has decreased to about forty thousand souls. The natives have become lazy and demoralized, and the white men, now that they have squeezed the lemon to the last drop, and have made the poor heathens what they are, leave the islands which seem to be of no more use to them. In the first instance they bought the land at a nominal price, and forced the poor natives to work for them at starving wages. A hundred years ago these islanders were a happy

and contented nation; and, considering their humble wants, they might have been called wealthy. They have become poorer and poorer year after year, and it seems as if a blast had fallen on these once happy islands.

There is abundance of impartial evidence given by reliable men, who have observed carefully the effect of missionary labors. We will quote here only a few of them.

Two travelers who recently visited the group of islands in the South Pacific Ocean known as the Union Islands published the observations of their voyage in a work called "The Coral Islands and their Inhabitants," from which we take the following extract, relating to the principal island, called Cotaфу: "The present missionary has been living on this island for about ten years, and is not only the priest, but has also become the ruler of the island. The king and his chiefs are still the nominal governors, but they do nothing without his sanction, as he has brought them completely under his subjection. The observance of the laws is very strictly enforced; these laws are the works of the missionary and contain the same fundamental principles as those which have been established by the English Mission in Raratonga. Among these laws the following are most severely enforced: Negligence of church attendance without a good excuse is severely punished. The use of tobacco is not permitted on Sunday; women are not allowed to use it at all. Nobody is allowed to leave his hut on Sunday without giving a good reason\*. Any woman

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\* Do we not discover in this injunction the so-called Sunday laws which are in practice in England and in the United States, and which in the latter have of late been particularly strictly enforced, for the purpose of driving the people into the churches by force and of restraining their personal liberty?

appearing in church without a certain kind of bonnet, which has been furnished them by English ladies connected with the Mission, is punished. Musical instruments have been entirely abolished, as they awaken the desire for dancing. No songs, except hymns taught by the missionaries, are allowed to be sung; and every islander, from the King down to the smallest child, is compelled to learn and recite every Sunday some verse from the Bible. Any transgression of these laws by the islanders is punished, not according to the character, but according to number of relapses; and the punishments consist generally in the fine of a certain measure of cotton goods. The payment of wages is generally made in this material, which in many other respects takes the place of money. A first transgression is punished by a fine of five measures of calico, of six feet each, the second by a double measure, and so forth, no matter whether the fault committed has been smoking, thieving, singing or anything else."

The celebrated traveler, Gerstaecker, expresses himself as follows about the missionaries: "They have their work constantly before their eyes; they are not blind, and know well enough how to take very good care of themselves. For many years past they have seen the consequences which their civilization and Christianity have exercised on the heathen races. The Indians have gradually disappeared from the face of the earth; great stone churches have been built, and their burial places have been filled with the bodies of the new Christians. Like a pestilence have these new manners and customs raged among them; but the land became valuable; cities and villages arose, the Europeans established plantations and became rich;

the Indians were driven to work, and either became slaves of the white man or were pushed back further and further, until they found a quiet place where they could die. Meanwhile, the activity of the missionary societies at home is incessant. They knit stockings for the poor heathen children, they collect money to build churches for them, and houses for the pious men, who, at the risk of their lives, preach the Gospel in the desert. The poor people in Europe deprive themselves of their last penny to help 'the poor heathen;' thousands and thousands are annually carried out of the country to feed the missionaries, and to assist them in casting into bonds a nation who, until their arrival, had lived happily and in peace. Yet, at home, the poor are starving and shivering with cold; the poor children of our northern countries run about bare-footed on the ice-covered fields of winter, whilst warm stockings are being knitted for heathen children living under a tropical sun."

Another reliable man, who has seen and observed, Kotzebue, the great Russian traveller, published similar observations many years ago. In a description of a church ceremony on the Island of Tahiti, and comparing the condition of the islanders before they were converted to Christianity with that after the first effects of missionary labor became perceptible, he remarks as follows: "After the missionaries had succeeded in converting the king of a certain district to their faith, the effect can only be compared to that produced by a fuse thrown into a cask filled with gunpowder. A terrible explosion followed. The old temples were destroyed and every memory of their former worship was annihilated: those who refused to accept the new faith were cruelly murdered. The fanatic

eagerness to make proselytes changed a peaceful, happy nation into a race of tigers. Streams of blood were shed, whole tribes were extirpated, and many courageously suffered martyrdom rather than renounce the creed of their forefathers. Only a few escaped into the high mountains, where they could not be followed, and lived there a miserable and lonely life, but remained faithful to their old creed."

Kotzebue admits that the missionaries, besides all this evil, have done some good. They destroyed the old heathenish superstitions and abolished many errors; but they introduced new ones that were even more harmful. They suppressed some vices and encouraged others, such as bigotry, hypocrisy and intolerance. They prevented the practice of human sacrifice, but more people were killed for the sake of the new faith than had ever been sacrificed to the ancient gods; and the terrible persecution, which the missionaries had provoked, worked with more fearful effect than the most fatal pestilence could have done. "I believe," he continues, "that the missionaries themselves were at first frightened at the effect of their preaching; but they soon eased their conscience, and have never since ceased to enforce, in the most rigorous manner, the strict observance of their doctrines. The consequence of this has been that the former elasticity of spirit among these tribes has entirely disappeared, and now they are lost in a continual brooding over things of which neither the teachers nor the pupils understand anything."

An American gentleman residing in Bangkok, the capital of Siam, wrote quite recently that the Presbyterians alone keep more than forty missionaries there. These

gentlemen live in comfortable houses surrounded by large gardens; they enjoy every luxury of life, keep large boats and a large staff of native servants. They are very influential with the government, and the gates of the royal palace are always open to them. The King is their friend, and as they have been in many cases the negotiators of the treaties with Christian nations they are looked upon as the real diplomats, and are consulted in every matter concerning the state. Their life and labor in that country can by no means be considered a sacrifice of comfort.

The so-called Rice-Christians in China offer another illustration of the manner in which heathens are converted to Christianity. These people have been converted in consideration of a certain quantity of rice which is regularly supplied to them. A characteristic anecdote is related by Gen. Oglethorpe, the founder of Georgia. A missionary who believed he had gained an American Indian for the true faith, and believed him to be sufficiently prepared to receive the sacrament, after he had partaken of the bread and the cup asked him whether he did not feel more spiritually contented and more satisfied in his innermost heart. The Indian replied that it tasted very good, "but," he added, with a smile, "brandy tastes better."

Many and just comments have been made in Protestant circles about the great sums of money which the Catholic population of all countries have contributed towards the Peter's Pence. This money is principally given by poor people who have earned a few pennies by hard labor, and have deprived themselves of the necessities of life to feed the Prince of the Church, whom they consider their master, and who is living in Rome in luxury and splendor. If they have no Pope and no



Peter's Pence in the Protestant Church, the members of that community are taxed to an amount of money compared to which the Peter's Pence appear as a mere trifle. These sums are used entirely for missionary purposes, that is to say, to support, in every part of the world, a large number of men whose purpose it is "to convert the heathen," whilst, in almost every instance, they have destroyed the peace and happiness of these heathens.

In the United States alone there are nine large Protestant missionary societies, which support more than four thousand missionaries, among whom there are three hundred and fifty women, at an annual cost of over four million dollars. If we take into consideration the money spent in England, France, Germany and other European countries, the sum of ten million dollars annually spent for missionary purposes will not prove to be exaggerated. Would this large sum of money not be spent more usefully if it were devoted to elevating the moral condition of the lower classes of America and Europe?

But not only among the heathens in other countries have Christian fanatics tried to make converts to their faith. American missionaries have endeavored to make proselytes among the different Protestant denominations in Europe. The Methodists and Baptists have been particularly active in this respect; and quite lately seventy thousand dollars have been voted by these two denominations for missionary purposes in Germany, Sweden, Norway and Denmark—new proof of the sad fact that Christianity is divided and wanting in union and harmony.

Only quite recently, in June, 1882, a violent dispute arose between two of the principal missionary societies of New York about the fields of action which were to be



allotted to each society. The American Board of Foreign Missions had always considered Turkey as their special domain, whilst the Baptist Mission considered Burmah as their particular province. There had never been any legal settlement upon this point, but there was a mutual understanding that neither of these missionary societies should interfere with the work of the other. A little while ago the Amenians of Turkey expressed a wish to be baptized by immersion. The Baptists were ready to meet this desire, and referred to the Bible as an authority that their manner of baptism was the only correct one, a statement which was violently disputed by the other sect. Thus we see that the quarrels of the different denominations are carried into the most distant countries. Can the dignity and respect of Christianity and religion be furthered by such dissensions?

We find some further information about missionary matters in the *Missionary Review*. It is an independent publication, edited by a former missionary of the name of Wilder. It criticizes freely the missions and the missionaries of all lands. Just now its special criticism is against the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, which, comparing it to a vessel, it intimates is covered with "an enormous growth of something worse than barnacles." It says that the officers of some of the boards exercise irresponsible and damaging power, and it suggests that both boards and officers need to be "hailed on the dry dock and scraped."

Another thoroughly reliable source of information, which will enable us to judge of the effect of missionary labors, is found in a recently-published volume, by the English missionary, James Gilmour, under the title,

“Among the Mongols.” Mr. Gilmour was stationed in Peking, and was an active worker for more than twelve years throughout China and Mongolia. He is one of the few Europeans who has become thoroughly familiar with the languages of the countries in which he resided, and was thus enabled, not only through his zeal but through his knowledge of the languages, to gain the desired end. And what does this honorable and truthful man say about the result? “So far, I have not seen a single convert among the Mongolians.” This candid confession shows that Mr. Gilmour did not feel inclined to deceive either himself or others. In another place he says: “The great interest which many of them showed when I preached the Gospel to them was chiefly caused by the circumstance that I gave them medical assistance when they were sick.” They sought bodily cures rather than spiritual light and comfort.

In a separate chapter Mr. Gilmour speaks of the difficulties which he encountered in his endeavors to convert the Mongols. They are mostly Buddhists and have often puzzled him with doubts and questions about their conversion to Christianity. He gives the following instance: “Admitting, for argument’s sake, the Christian doctrine that we can recognize and expect to meet such of our friends as go to heaven, he (the Mongol) asks, ‘How about those whom we do not meet there, and who are gone to the place of torment? Knowing that they are suffering, can we be happy? And if God knows everything, and knows before He has created them that such and such men will be sinners, and not be saved, but go to hell, why, knowing all this, does He, who is goodness and love, make such men at all? And why did not God,

who made the world and rules it, and knows all and can do all, why did not he prevent the serpent from deceiving our first parents, and keep sin from entering the world at all?' The Mongols are also troubled about the idea of the Trinity. They want to know what has been the fate of innumerable heathens who have died without ever hearing of Christ. They are shocked at the notion of an eternal hell, from which escape is forever impossible. And they ask, 'How do we know all that our Bible tells us of a future state to be true. Has any one among us died, gone to the world to come, seen these things, and come back to life to report on them?''

We see that the Mongols, these heathens, do not believe blindly, but reflect; and the same doubts and hesitation which arise in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of men, who apparently believe in Christianity, spring up in the minds of these distant people.

Not only Christianity sends its missionaries into the world, but Mohammedanism does the same, and with much greater success. The Christian missionaries, in the year 1880, claimed to have converted twenty thousand Chinese, whilst the Mohammedans claimed to have gained over one hundred thousand to their faith. The Mohammedans, whose purpose it is to replace the worship of idols and of polytheism by the belief in one Supreme Being, gained their first success in countries where Christians had not been able to make converts, or had soon lost the few which they had made. The African tribes, who cannot understand the complicated doctrine and miracles of Christianity, prefer the simple teachings of the Koran, and, for this reason, Mohammedanism is constantly gaining ground in parts of Asia and Africa, where Christianity

has never been able to get a foothold. India alone contains more than sixty million Mohammedans against two million Christians, which proves that the Indians, outside of the Hindoo creed, prefer the simple doctrine of Mohammed to the incomprehensible miracles of Christianity; and this again explains the cause of the widespread and determined antagonism to Christian publications which prevails in India. In Lucknow and Cawnpore there are forty-five publishing houses, which are almost entirely confined to the issuing of anti-Christian writings. One of these houses received lately a gift of four thousand dollars for the purpose of publishing and distributing writings in favor of the Mohammedan creed, whilst another house received from a rich Hindoo a considerable sum to be spent in the issuing and distributing of tracts relating to the Hindoo religion. And what are the means which Christian missionaries in India employ to gain proselytes? They travel from place to place, and, by means of a magic lantern, throw pictures upon a white cloth representing incidents of biblical history. They accompany this show with spiritual songs, supported by an organ which is carried about on a wagon drawn by oxen.

And what has been the result of many years of missionary labor among the wild nations who believe in evil spirits and sorcery? In the districts adjacent to the Congo river, where missionaries have been active for many years, the natives, to this day, are given up to the wildest belief in witches and sorcery. Every sickness, every death or other misfortune, is ascribed to witches. A magician is called upon to tell who has performed the sorcery; the unfortunate person who is supposed to be guilty is subjected

to the most cruel torments, and if the accusation is assumed to have been proved, the victim is cruelly killed.

It is a curious fact that many of the rich English merchants, who contribute large sums for missionary purposes, manufacture or deal in idols intended for the heathen nations, and do a very lucrative business with them.

In recent years another and most objectionable means has been discovered for Christianizing the world,—namely, the so-called Salvation Armies, which have followers of both sexes, and are organized under military discipline. They not only hold public meetings, but they also march with music, singing and praying through the streets where they are exposed to the insults and the scoffing of the rabble. Every seriously-thinking man must come to the conclusion that by such sensational and offensive behavior every denomination must be injured, and religion itself be exposed to contempt and ridicule. These so-called Salvation Armies are, in truth, armies of ungodliness, and may be compared to the community of Flagellants. Like every kind of fanaticism, it has been the cause of incalculable mischief, and many a poor weak-minded creature, who has followed their irrational teachings, has ended a miserable life in a mad-house. The founder and leader of these fanatics is a certain Booth, General Booth as he calls himself, who appoints his captains and officers according to his own liking, and these soldiers are distinguished by a certain kind of uniform. Sensationalism, hypocrisy and a disgusting noisy demeanor are the characteristics of this movement. Silent prayer is positively forbidden; the members of the Salvation Armies, like the Pharisees, say their prayers in public places, and at the corners of the streets. Booth says to

his followers: "The ordinary Church service is absolutely useless to awaken souls ; a strictly military despotism is the only means to place man in peace and harmony with God." Indeed, a blissful principle for converting the world ! It is unnecessary to try to prove what a demoralizing effect it must have, when old people, married men and women, and even children, publicly denounce their own transgressions against morality and decency. And what is the material of which these Salvation Armies are composed ? A certain Mylius, who, after having served a term of thirteen years in the State prison of Sing Sing, was discharged from there on the 8th of August, 1882. He came to New York, was "converted," and joined the Salvation Army on the 16th of the same month. On the following day he stole a watch on Broadway, and was again condemned to five months' imprisonment. After having served this term he joined again the Army, and was promoted to the rank of Corporal. In April, 1883, he was again arrested for fraud.

A young girl of 14 years accused, in Syracuse, N. Y., one of the officers of the Army, a certain Mott, of seduction and breach of promise of marriage. Mott did not deny the facts, but stated that he could not bother himself about the marriage, he had to work at his great mission, to convert the world, and could not fetter himself with such profane business as marriage. Mott has not lost his position with the Salvation Army.

A Mrs. Thompson, in 1883, brought suit before the Supreme Court of the State of New York for divorce from her husband, who had been repeatedly guilty of improper intercourse with Mary Davidson, a soldier of the Salvation Army.



Samuel Harrington, of Brooklyn, a member of the Salvation Army, brought suit against the sixty-year old preacher, Bundick, for seduction and rape, committed on his daughter, seventeen years of age.

Caroline T. Gardner, occupying the position of a Captain in the Salvation Army, stole clothing to the amount of sixty dollars from the house of a Mrs. Roozer. She pleaded guilty to the crime, and was condemned to two years' imprisonment. From such a rabble the Salvation Army takes its recruits; Christian priests look upon it quietly and complacently, and zealous people further it by large contributions in money. In the year 1883 the receipts of the Salvation Army amounted to not less than three hundred and ninety-three thousand pounds, or about two million dollars.

These Salvation Armies originated in England, but they have spread rapidly over Scotland, Ireland, Holland, Sweden, Germany, Switzerland and the United States, they have even appeared in Australia and in the East Indies. Let us hope that the people will soon grow tired of this disgrace, and will put a stop to it, as has already been done in Switzerland.

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### Christian Fanaticism.

It is a painful fact in the history of the world that immediately after the appearance of that man who was to bring peace and good-will into the world there followed many centuries of bloodshed and crime, greater than any which had preceeded his coming. The most cruel persecutions against all who believed differently from those who called themselves the true followers of Jesus have been committed in the name of him who said: "I give



you peace, I leave you my peace," and, "Thereby I shall know that you are my disciples, that you love one another." How much blood has been shed! How many cruel persecutions have been instigated! How much misery has been caused!

But can we wonder at this, if we find in the Bible expressions by St. Paul and others which are directly opposed to the gospel of peace and love, which Jesus has preached, and which, on the contrary, have excited hatred and persecution?

St. Paul, in chap. i. 8 of his Epistle to the Galatians, says: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." In the second Epistle of John, 10, 11, it is said, "If there come any one unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaken of his evil deeds." In Jeremiah, chap. xlviii. 10, we read, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood."

St. Jerome utters the following curse against non-Christians: "And if thy younger brothers and sisters cling to thy neck, and if thy mother, with tears and disheveled hair and torn garments, shows thee the bosom which has nourished thee, and if thy father lies down on the threshold of thy house, kick them out, and hasten with dry eyes to the flag of the cross."

These are expressions which can only excite the passions of men, work evil, and stir up persecution and hatred; and we find innumerable instances in history where this has been the case.

I will only quote a few facts:

The wars of the Donatists in Africa in the fourth century.

The persecutions of the Maccabees in the ninth century, which cost the lives of many hundreds of thousands of people.

The seven Crusades from the eleventh to the thirteenth century. The English historian Hume comments upon these as follows: "After the taking of Jerusalem in the first Crusade nobody was spared; the child was killed at its mother's breast, who was begging for mercy. Nearly ten thousand of the inhabitants, who had surrendered on the promise of free pardon, were butchered in cold blood. It is certain that during the whole of this terrible period the Christians have been far more cruel and merciless than the Mohammedans, whose country they invaded; whilst the gallant Saladin, when Jerusalem was reconquered by the Turks, never permitted any excesses on the part of his warriors. Historians calculate that during the century and a half in which the seven Crusades occurred more than two million people lost their lives."

In 1184 the Waldenses were excommunicated by Pope Lucius III., which gave the signal for their persecution. A contemporary writer, who was an eye-witness of the horrors which were committed, reports as follows: "To-day, the 11th of June, I was present at the slaughter of the Waldenses. To speak the truth, I can compare the scene only to the butchering of so many sheep. Like a flock of sheep, they were locked up in a shed. The executioner entered, took one of the victims out, covered his face with a cloth, and led him into a field. There he made him kneel down and then cut his throat. Then he

took the bloody cloth, went for another, and proceeded in the same manner. In this way eighty-eight people were killed, one after another. I shudder when I only think of the murderer as he stood with the bloody knife between his teeth, the bloody cloth in his hand, his bare arm dripping with blood, butchering one victim after the other."

The Inquisition existed from the thirteenth even to the nineteenth century. P. A. Lorente, one of the last secretaries of the Inquisition, in his "History of the Inquisition," gives a list of those who, in Spain alone, suffered death and other punishments from 1452 to 1808. Thirty-one thousand seven hundred and eighteen people were burned; 174,111 died in prison, or fled and were burned in effigy; 287,522 suffered other punishments. The greatest number of victims fell in the time of Torquemada, who, from 1452 to 1499, forty-seven years, was Grand Inquisitor. During this period 8800 people were burned, 6400 died in prison or fled, and 90,094 suffered other kinds of punishment. The Inquisition lasted through the seventeenth and eighteenth, and into the nineteenth century, and was only abolished in 1808, by Joseph Bonaparte. Ferdinand VII. re-established it in 1814, but was compelled, by the revolution of March 9th, 1820, to abolish it again. After the Restoration in 1825 it was once more introduced. In 1834 the Inquisition was again abolished and its property confiscated for the benefit of the national debt. Most of its horrors were committed between 1481 and 1746. From 1746 to 1759 ten people were burned alive, five were burned in effigy, and one hundred and seventy condemned to the galleys. From 1788 to 1808 one person was burned alive; in 1808 twenty-

two were condemned to the galleys and to imprisonment. We have no reliable data about the victims from 1808 to the final abolition, but we know that nobody has been burned since 1808.

The Inquisition flourished chiefly in Spain, but has also sacrificed numerous victims in France, Germany, Austria, Portugal, the Netherlands, Italy and Sardinia. More than twenty thousand people were butchered in the twelfth century in Beziers, in France. The murderers carried the cross before them.

The Sicilian Vespers took place on the 30th of March, 1282, when thousands of people perished by violence. Even now, six hundred years afterwards, the anniversary of this day of horrors is observed with festivities; the last took place in Palermo, in 1882, when four days were devoted to festive proceedings.

In 1209 Pope Innocent III. proclaimed a crusade against the Albigenses which lasted for eighteen years, during which time many human beings were killed and the most beautiful parts of southern France were devastated.

In the fourteenth century the persecutions and burning of the Beguins on the Rhine and in France took place.

From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, the Courts of Heresy.

One hundred and ninety-one Flagellants were burned in Sangerhausen in 1414.

On the 6th of July, 1415, John Huss was burnt in Constance.

Jerome of Prague met the same fate on the 30th of May, 1416.

The terrible war of the Hussites lasted from 1419 to 1434; more than one hundred and fifty thousand people perished during this period. The Hussites called themselves the "Warriors of God," or "The Champions of Evangelical Truth." They carried their terrible warfare from Bohemia into the neighboring countries of Moravia, Austria, Hungary, Bavaria, Silesia, Lucatia, Saxony and Franconia. Terror went before them, and the belief in their invincibility sustained their cruel power for many years.

The persecution of the Huguenots continued from 1472 to 1598.

Savanarola was burnt in Florence, 23d of May, 1498.

The fifteenth century witnessed the persecution of the Moravian Brothers. Many were tortured, burned alive, quartered or turned out of their houses, even those who were sick. A new persecution was aroused in 1547, and a great number of Moravian Brothers were compelled to fly to foreign countries.

The cruel and murderous persecution of the Iconoclasts took place in the sixteenth century.

On the 27th of October, 1553, Michael Servetus was burned in Geneva, at the instigation of Calvin, because he denied the doctrine of the Trinity.

John Gentilis, a disciple of Servetus, was beheaded in Berne in 1560.

In the year 1568 the Spanish Inquisition condemned a large number of the inhabitants of the Netherlands to death.

At the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, in 1572, about thirty thousand people were killed in Paris alone, and more than one hundred thousand in the whole of France.

The wars of the Netherlands in the sixteenth century.

Giordano Bruno was burned in the year 1600, in Rome, by the Inquisition.

Henning Brabant, a prominent citizen of Brunswick, was accused, in 1604, on account of his Calvinistic views, of having made a compact with the devil. He was imprisoned, and in his attempt to escape broke one of his legs. He was put on the rack and tortured for three hours, by which one of his arms was torn from its socket. He was then condemned to death and carried to the place of execution. They first cut off two of his fingers and pinched him with red hot tongs. Not satisfied with these torments they split open his abdomen, and, that he might not lose consciousness, they held a sponge filled with aromatic spirits under his nose. His accusers were bigoted Lutheran clergymen, who, even to the last moment, tried to convert him.

In the year 1609 the Moors, the founders of art and science in Spain, were expelled on account of their belief.

The Thirty Years' War, which lasted from 1618 to 1648, sacrificed the lives of several millions of people, and retarded the progress of Germany for a century. The princely executioner, the Duke of Alba, boasted that, by him alone, eighteen thousand heretics perished in the Netherlands.

On the 19th of February, 1619, Vanini was burned in Toulouse for his work on natural sciences.

At the massacre of the Veltin Protestants in the year 1690 about six hundred people lost their lives.

At the storming and destruction of Magdeburg, in 1631, more than thirty thousand Protestants were murdered in the most cruel manner. Neither old nor young were

spared. Children were thrown into the flames of burning houses.

The middle of the seventeenth century witnessed the most cruel denominational persecutions in America. A law was published in Massachusetts which decided that faith alone, not good actions, was necessary for salvation. Whoever was opposed to the baptism of children was to be banished, and whoever denied the infallibility of the Bible was to be whipped in public; and, in case of the repetition of his offense, he was to be condemned to death.

One of the most cruel instances of persecution by Christian fanatics is that of the Quakers. These peaceful, law-loving and industrious people were called by their enemies a detestable sect, and their doctrines were characterized as irreconcilable with any form of government. Wherever they showed themselves in England they were exposed to danger and punishment. They were whipped in public, and thrown into prison with robbers and murderers. Between 1650 and 1689 more than fourteen thousand were punished with fines and imprisonment, and more than three hundred perished in consequence of ill-usage and want. They fared even worse in the American colonies, where they had sought shelter from their persecutors. In the Puritan States, among the "Holy Pilgrims," tolerance for other beliefs was unknown.

The first two Quakers arrived in America in 1656. As soon as they had arrived their boxes were searched, their books confiscated and publicly burnt by the hangman. After having suffered great wrongs and persecution, and after having been kept in prison for five weeks, they were expelled from the country. The jailor robbed them of their beds and other necessities because they could not



pay the prison fees. Eight Quakers, who had landed in Boston, were imprisoned and afterward sent back in the same ship which had brought them over. In October, 1656, a law passed the Legislature of Massachusetts which provided that every captain of a vessel who brought a Quaker to the colony should pay a fine of £100 sterling, and find security to take him back again in the same vessel; if the Quaker should venture to land he should be whipped in public and imprisoned. In the year 1658 another law was passed in Massachusetts which provided that any person who should receive a Quaker into his house should pay a fine of £2 for every hour which the Quaker remained with him. If a Quaker was found anywhere in the colony he should receive twenty lashes; in the case he remained one of his ears should be cut off, or, if a woman, she should be publicly whipped. In case they did not leave then, whether a man or a woman, their tongue should be pierced with a red-hot iron. If a Quaker who had once been banished returned to the colony, he should at once be beheaded. Another law provided that every person belonging to the "accursed sect of Quakers" who was found within the territory of Massachusetts should be imprisoned, tried and banished, on penalty of death. This Christian law was put into execution in the same year. Marmaduke Stephenson and William Robinson were hanged in Boston on the 22d of October, 1658, and Mary Dyer suffered the same penalty on the following day. These executions were followed by other unspeakable cruelties.

A law passed in England at last put a stop to these horrors. The hanging, flaying and burning of Quakers was abolished; but the fanatics found means to further persecute these inoffensive people. The law against vagrants

was enforced against them. According to this anybody might arrest a Quaker and drag him before the next magistrate, where he was stripped down to the waist and publicly whipped. The victim was then tied to a cart and dragged from town to town until he reached the borders of the colony. In fact, the cruelties now became more terrible, and the human heart shudders at such horrors. In 1662, three women—Anna Coleman, Mary Tompkins and Alice Ambrose—were tied to a cart, and first whipped through Dover, and afterward through ten other cities. An old Quaker woman of 60 years, Elizabeth Houton, was whipped through Cambridge, Waterlow and Dedham; she was imprisoned and whipped again, and finally sent to Rhode Island, with an order to have her whipped again from city to city.

Against the Catholics particularly stringent laws were issued. A Catholic priest performing any church service, or any Catholic keeping a school or engaged in the instruction of the young, was to be punished with imprisonment for life. The Catholics were not allowed to hold land. The church service, according to the rites of the Catholic Church, was strictly forbidden in Pennsylvania. Catholics were not allowed to settle in Georgia. In 1746 a Catholic priest in New York was executed, having been falsely accused of conspiracy with negroes, and because he was a Catholic.

The first Puritans who landed in America, in 1620 had fled from England to escape religious persecution. Yet these same people who had suffered most severely from intolerance became, in their new home, the most blood-thirsty persecutors of those who believed differently, and became a scourge of their fellow-citizens.

And all these horrors were performed to preserve the "pure Christian religion."

Even to-day, to the disgrace of our century and of America, that Puritan spirit of persecution, that dark, devilish Puritan hatred against all that believe differently, shows itself at every opportunity. It is the same gloomy spirit which inspires contempt of other creeds; again and again it has attempted to revive the hateful Sunday laws, which are totally opposed to the spirit of our age, as interfering with the liberty of our person and of our conscience, and which is the bitterest enemy of peaceful social life.

In the seventeenth century the burning of heretics was one of the principal features of the festivities at royal marriages. Four hundred unfortunate people were sacrificed on one of these occasions, and the spectators looked, without any show of human feeling, upon the miserable victims of fanaticism.

The same century witnessed the persecution of the Jews in Spain and persons of other creeds in England, Ireland and Scotland.

More than thirty thousand families were compelled to leave the country during the Bohemian Counter-Reformation because they refused to become Catholics.

Pope Urban VII., in the seventeenth century, published a bull, "In cœna Domini," in which every kind of heresy was cursed in the name of the Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This bull is read to this day in every Catholic church on Maundy-Thursday.

In 1685 Louis XIV. revoked the Edict of Nantes, which Henry IV. had issued in 1598 for the protection of the Protestants. In consequence of this revocation the Protestants lost all civil and religious rights; all contracts,

sàles, wills, marriages and baptisms were declared void. Their children were declared to be illegitimate; they were taken away from their families, and when, after their eighth year, they professed any inclination for the Catholic religion, they were sent into monasteries to be educated. Those who remained faithful to their faith were deprived of their property. Protestant schools and churches were destroyed; their church-yards were closed, and the dead bodies carried about in the streets. Dragoons of the royal army were quartered in Protestant houses, with instructions to abuse their hosts and to plunder their houses until they declared themselves ready to abjure their faith (Dragonades). Those who had assisted at the secret meetings of the Protestants, or who had taken part in their services, were sent to the galleys. Devastation spread over the land, women were found wandering in the fields, or hiding themselves in the forest to give birth to their children. Large numbers of prisoners, with ropes round their necks, were dragged from one end of the kingdom to the other. Children were torn away from their mothers, yea, even the delicate little creatures who are tied to us by the strongest bonds of love and duty were torn away from their mother's breast. The children were imprisoned in monasteries and convents, where they were taught to curse their parents.

The persecution of the Camisards took place from 1701 to 1705, during which period more than forty thousand people were executed by the Catholics under the most cruel torments.

On Palm Sunday of the year 1703 two hundred Protestants, men, women and children, performed religious services in a private house in Nismes, in France; they

were surprised by the royal governor; the house was surrounded and set on fire, and most of them perished in the flames. Those who attempted to escape were shot down in the street. Not even the child at the mother's breast was spared.

In the year 1761 there lived in Toulouse, in France, a respectable merchant called Jean Calas, a Protestant, who was the father of several sons. One of these sons had been converted to the Catholic Church; another, who had been in a state of melancholy and depression for some time, committed suicide one day by hanging himself in front of his father's house. The population, consisting chiefly of the most fanatic Catholics, without any cause or reason, accused the old man of the murder of his son because the latter wished also to embrace the Catholic religion. He was tried and condemned to be put on the rack, and afterwards to be broken on the wheel. This act of fanaticism provoked everywhere a loud cry of indignation.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, a certain Rosenfeld wandered through the Mark Brandenburg, declaring himself to be a new Christ. He gained a considerable following among the country people, and exercised such influence over them that they even offered him their daughters to satisfy his carnal desires, thinking that they were doing a work pleasing to God. As soon as the matter became known to Frederick the Great, Rosenfeld was tried, condemned to be publicly whipped and to be imprisoned for life.

About the same time a shoemaker in Foelenbeck, Germany, quoting the Revelation as an authority, declared himself to be the second Christ. He had discovered a new Trinity. He did not pretend to be Jesus, who had

already existed, nor was he Emmanuel, who was yet to come, but he was Christ, the son of Mary, "the woman clothed in the rays of the sun." This Mary was the wife of another shoemaker, with whom he had improper intercourse. Even this man found followers. And another shoemaker family called itself the "Christ family."

The year 1815 witnessed again the most cruel Protestant persecutions in Nismes.

In the year 1826 a schoolmaster named Bipoll was burned in Valencia, in Spain, because he had embraced deism.

In 1852 a certain Madai and his wife were sentenced, in Toscana, to the galleys because they had been converted to Protestantism.

In Bell county, Texas, there existed for several years a society of so-called Free-thinkers, the president of which, in the year 1877, was Dr. Russell, a well-known and thoroughly honorable man. During the night of the 6th of October, in that year, he was called up to visit a sick woman living at some distance from his dwelling-place. When he had followed for a short distance the man who had called him, he was suddenly surrounded by men armed with revolvers. They ordered him to undress himself, whipped him, and then commanded him to discontinue his lectures. On the following day a notice was put up at the place where Dr. Russell had been abused, threatening death to any one who would presume to take his place.

Year after year collisions take place between Catholics and Orangemen in Canada, in which the former are generally the aggressors. At a riot which took place on the 29th of April, 1878, one man was killed and several others wounded. Several bloody riots took place in Scotland,



in the summer of 1883, between Catholics and Orangemen, and in Ireland in November, 1883.

A band of Catholics, on the 26th of June, 1879, sacked a Protestant school-house in the County Galway, Ireland, and threw all the Bibles which they found there into the sea.

It is well known that the Greek Church, like all other Christian denominations, is divided into many sects. The dissenters, to the number of ten millions, are opposed to the doctrines of the Orthodox Church, and have been cruelly persecuted by the latter. Their churches were either destroyed or closed; a few which remained open were not allowed to be repaired. The dissenters were not permitted to print any religious works; they could not be employed in government or municipal service, nor could they keep schools of their own; yet their children were not allowed to enter the public schools. They were not permitted to employ servants or workmen of the Orthodox Church, nor to adopt the children of Orthodox parents. The *Golos* reports that on the 17th of July, 1879, a party of these dissenters, consisting of nineteen families, with little children, came from Kazan to Tiflis, in the Caucasus; all the men were heavily laden with chains. For sixteen years they had been persecuted on account of their faith, and were finally banished to the Caucasus.

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The persecution of the Jews forms a separate chapter in the history of Christian fanaticism. It has dragged through all centuries and even to-day, in the nineteenth century, it has been resurrected, to the shame and disgrace of our time. The following data, although not at all complete, will satisfy our reader in regard to the unreasona-



ble and bitter hatred which the Jews have suffered from their Christian fellow-men.

The first Jewish persecution dates from the seventh century, when the Christians asserted that they saw in the Jews the authors of every public misfortune.

From the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, the period of the Crusades, the Jews were exposed to cruel persecutions, which were encouraged by the princes and the nobles of the country, who, in this manner, relieved themselves of the debts which they owed to the Jews. These persecutions of the Israelites took place in Spain, under Alphonse III.; in France, under Philip Augustus; in England, in 1020, and again at the coronation of Richard I. In the German and Italian cities where they were allowed to abide they were confined within a certain quarter of the town, which was called the "Ghetto," and which was closed at night.

A cruel persecution of the Jews occurred in 1172, during the third Crusade, in Gath, in Palestine.

From the twelfth to the fifteenth century thousands of Jews were burned and otherwise cruelly murdered in Germany; many of them rushed in despair into the flames of the burning synagogues.

In the year 1318 they were driven out of the country by Philip V. Those who allowed themselves to be baptized were permitted to remain, but even these were robbed of the property belonging to them and their children.

Some twenty thousand Jews were burned in Strassburg during the fourteenth century.

In the years 1348-49, when the plague, known as the "Black Death," ravaged the countries of Europe, the

Jews were persecuted in the most cruel manner. They were accused of having caused this pestilence by poisoning the wells. They were persecuted with fire and sword, and they were driven away even from those places where they had hitherto been tolerated.

A cruel persecution of the Jews took place in Erfurt in the year 1349.

In 1390 another persecution occurred, which was led by a priest, when four thousand men, women and children lost their lives.

In 1454 they were expelled from Bavaria.

In 1480 several thousands were burned in Spain.

In 1506 more than two thousand baptized Jews were murdered in Lisbon.

In 1509 they were driven from Cologne and Marburg.

In 1519 the whole Jewish community was expelled from Regensburg. The quarter which they had inhabited was pulled down with their synagogue, their burial-ground was devastated, and on the spot where their synagogue had stood a chapel was built, dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

During the whole of the eighteenth century Jewish persecutions took place in Russia. The Empress Elizabeth, in 1743, expelled from St. Petersburg the Jews whom Peter the Great had hospitably received. Catherine II. permitted them to return; they were again driven out of the capital by Nicholas I., and sent into the provinces.

In 1818 the Jews were expelled from Luebeck, and the cities of Hamburg and Frankfort deprived them of the privileges which they had enjoyed for many years.

As late as 1822 the Jews were not allowed to enter the service of the state in Prussia.

In 1839 the Jews were forbidden to be in the city of Bale on Sundays.

The Jews were exposed to the most cruel persecution and barbarous torments in 1840, in Damascus, with the authority of the representative of a Christian power, the French Consul-General, Count Ratti-Menton.

In 1851 the law preventing the Jews from settling in any of the Cantons of Switzerland was strictly enforced.

In 1870 the most cruel deeds of violence were practiced upon the Jews in Roumania; the Prince of Roumania and his fanatical adherents were by no means opposed to these acts of violence.

On the 23d of June, 1878, a rising against the Jews occurred in Kalisch, which may be numbered amongst the most violent excesses which have taken place against this race. The synagogues and other houses of prayer were destroyed, altars and pulpits were demolished, and even the Ark of the Covenant was torn open, and the rolls containing the law destroyed. Many Jews were killed with flails and scythes, and the families were obliged to barricade themselves in their houses.

The Catholic party in the German Parliament proposed, in November, 1878, a measure against the Jews who held judicial positions.

The proprietor of a large hotel in the American watering-place Saratoga refused to receive Israelites in his house. This evil example was followed by some other hotel proprietors in the neighborhood of New York.

In 1879 placards were posted in the streets of Lachaux de Fonds, in Switzerland, threatening the Jews with death.

An attempt at a Jewish persecution began in the summer of 1879, in Berlin. At the head of this movement was

the court preacher, Stoecker, who was also a member of the German parliament. A petition was circulated which prayed that the number of Jewish residents in any city of the Empire should be limited ; banking and other business houses conducted by Jews were to be subjected to excessive taxation ; they were to be excluded from all government offices. This petition was signed in a comparatively short time by two hundred and fifty thousand names. This hatred of the Jews soon became prominent in other cities of Germany. In Crefeld, the house of an Israelite merchant was demolished.

In the University building, in Leipsic, a placard was placed asking the students to assist in the expulsion of their fellow-students of the Jewish faith, and also to petition the authorities for the removal of Jewish professors.

The bad example which Berlin had set soon had its effect in other countries. In the Hungarian village of Tisza Ezlar a rumor was circulated, about Easter-time, 1882, that the Jews had inveigled a young Christian girl into their synagogue, and had murdered her to use her blood, which, according to an old tradition, the Jews need for certain ceremonies. At the trial it was proved that the rumor was without foundation, and that the fanatics had persuaded a young boy, a son of one of the accused persons, to perjure himself in order to produce evidence. Fanaticism continued to rage with unabated violence, and produced Jewish persecutions in other parts of Hungary even after the accused had been acquitted, and the falsity of the accusation had been proved.

In Gross-Surany the mob tried to throw a Jewish woman into the flames of a burning house. A Jew who had attempted to prevent this outrage was shamefully

abused, and another who tried to assist was so cruelly treated that he lost one hand.

Jewish persecutions in Russia have occurred quite recently. In St. Petersburg a great number of men of business who had been settled there for many years received orders to leave the city within twenty-four hours. In Elizabetgrad every house belonging to the Jews was destroyed; whole rows of houses were leveled to the ground, and the city had the appearance of having been visited by an earthquake. People who had enjoyed wealth and comfort were made beggars, many were cruelly wounded, many were killed. Thousands of these unfortunate people had become homeless and destitute, and had to rely upon public charity, whilst the authorities gave strict orders against the opening of subscription lists for the benefit of the sufferers.

Jewish persecutions, of the most ruthless character took place in August, 1883, in several Russian cities, among others in Paulograd, Rostow, Berchadi and Yekaterinoslav. In Berchadi eighty houses belonging to Jews were burned to the ground, and in Yekaterinoslav three hundred and forty-six Jewish dwellings were plundered and destroyed.

Even in free Switzerland, in St. Gall, a riot against the Jews took place in June, 1883, when many Jewish houses and stores were demolished.

That such scenes occur in Russia, a country which is still in a state of semi-barbarism, cannot be wondered at; but when in civilized countries like Germany, the boasted home of intelligence and culture, when, in the very capital of that country, such scenes are still possible, without the immediate and energetic interference of

the government, such a state of things can only arouse a feeling of shame and disgrace.

And the Christian priests, whose duty it should be to work against such an abomination, and who have the power from their pulpits to prevent them, do nothing to interfere with the rabble which is fired by the most ferocious fanaticism. They look with indifference upon these horrors, as if they had nothing to do with them. Shame upon such priests who pretend to have religion in their hearts, and who promote cruelty and ungodliness!

What would the Christians say if the Jews had committed outrages such as we have described above! Are the Jews inferior to the Christians? It is not the fault of the Jews which has caused these persecutions, but the defective moral and religious education which both the Protestant and Catholic Churches have given to their followers. That the Jews are in every respect equal to the Christians has been proved in thousands of instances, in which Jews have evinced a nobility of heart and spirit which must arouse our admiration. Their family life, their perseverance, temperance and industry, the respect of children towards their parents, their conjugal fidelity, call for our highest respect. Statistics of all countries teach us that the percentage of crime is smallest among the Jews. According to Schleiden, who is an authority in these matters, one illegitimate child comes to every ten persons among the Protestants, whilst among the Jews the proportion is one to twenty-five. In the Grand Duchy of Baden, one hundred and thirty-two suicides among Christians occurred during the ten years from 1836 to 1845, whilst not a single one took place among the Jews residing in that country.



And while the Jews in New York constitute about ten per cent. of the population, they form less than one per cent. of the criminal classes.

It is unnecessary to dwell here upon the brilliant success which Jews have achieved in science, philosophy, medicine, jurisprudence, also in music and other arts.

Do the Christians and Jewish persecutors forget that Christianity is entirely based upon Judaism, and that Jesus himself was a Jew?

As regards the accusation which has been brought against the Jews, that in their great religious ceremonies they use the blood of Christians, Mons. Renan, the celebrated author of the "Life of Jesus," on the occasion of the Jewish persecutions in Tisza Ezlar, wrote to the rabbis in Hungary as follows: "Of all the slanders which hatred and fanaticism have circulated, that which accuses the Jews of the murder of Christians for the purpose of using their blood at religious ceremonies is surely the most absurd. One of the principal characteristics of the Jewish faith is the commandment against the shedding of blood. This measure of precaution, which served in former times to keep awake the respect due to life, has been observed in the most conscientious manner by the Jews of all times. Yet it is pretended that the pious Israelite, who would rather die of hunger than eat a morsel of flesh that has not been perfectly cleansed from blood, would, at any religious ceremony, partake of blood. This accusation is as monstrous as it is stupid. I am convinced that all these stories about the bloody Jewish Easter festival are wanting in even the shadow of foundation. If such a misdeed had ever been committed, the wretch who would have been guilty of such a crime would have acted in contempt of



all Jewish law ; and I go farther and maintain that such a deed is actually impossible. In the domain of slander the human imagination is very fertile. The fable of those mysterious meals where human blood was used has been used as an accusation against those whom a blind prejudice wishes to destroy. The same false accusation has been brought against the Christians, but no such crime has ever defiled a Christian ceremony. It would be a worthy task of Christianity to extirpate that disgraceful falsehood, which has already caused so much mischief."

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We have sufficiently proved in the foregoing pages what part Christian fanaticism has played in the lives of nations. How it has destroyed the public peace, and excited and aroused cruelty and bloodshed. We will now quote a few instances in the lives of individuals and families where it has led to the most outrageous excesses. The data are necessarily incomplete. With the exception of the first five, which occurred in 1725, 1794, 1805, 1819 and 1855, all have taken place within the last twenty years, and have become known accidentally to the author by reading. He who would make a systematic collection of them would have overwhelming material before him ; for instances of fanaticism have never been wanting at any time and in any place.

In the first half of the eighteenth century there existed in Paris a sect called the Convulsionists of St. Medard, who thought to please God by undergoing the most terrible self-inflicted torments. They tied themselves on wooden crosses. The celebrated physician Moraud, of the Hotel Dieu, saw some of them who had been nailed by their hands and feet on the cross. Others pierced their

flesh with swords, and split their tongues in twain. All this was done to represent the hideousness of sin in its glaring light,—sin which can only be expiated by bodily torments. The crucifixion was to represent the sufferings of Jesus. More than five hundred female Medardists exposed themselves to the torments of fire, or had their heads squeezed between wooden planks; they allowed themselves to be castigated with heavy iron rods, or with stones, or with wooden cudgels, in order to prove that all these torments only caused them pleasure, and that God had made them invulnerable.

In the year 1794 a certain McCausian, of Gardner, Massachusetts, killed a woman whom, he said, had sinned against the Trinity. After he had killed her he set the house on fire, and when called to account he made no denial of his crime, but said that he had only done his duty towards God, and that his conscience was perfectly at ease about it.

In 1805 there lived in Venice a shoemaker called Matteo Casale, who, through continual Bible-reading, had come to the conclusion that he should die on the cross like Jesus. For this purpose he manufactured a heavy wooden cross, upon which he nailed himself by his hands and feet, and also wounded himself in the side. The cross, which had been fastened to the ceiling by thick ropes, was so arranged that he could let it glide out of the window. There he was seen and taken down, and placed under medical treatment. The superhuman energy possessed by this man, the madness and contempt of pain to which his fanaticism drove him, are almost incredible. We find a minute description of this case in the sixth volume of the *New Pitaval*.

Margaret Peter, in 1819, in Switzerland, crucified her sister first, and then allowed herself to be nailed to the cross.

The shoemaker Vogt, in Chemnitz, in 1855, persuaded two women whose children were sick that the latter were possessed by the devil, and should be sacrificed. This deed of horror was actually accomplished by the two mothers.

The wife of a farmer named Bender, in Clinton County, Illinois, in January, 1873, had assisted at a series of revival meetings, which had excited her very much. During the night of the 1st of February, Bender heard a noise in his bed-room, and when he had made a ligh the saw his wife just leaving the room with her only child, a boy thirteen months old, in her arms. He asked her what she was going to do, to which she replied that her boy's name was Isaac, and that God had appeared to her and commanded her to follow the example of Abraham and to sacrifice her child, and that she was going into the kitchen to get a knife. The terrified husband snatched the child away from her, and watched carefully over his wife until the morning. During the next few days Bender thought he had succeeded in calming his wife. But when he returned, some days afterwards, to his house, and opened the door of the kitchen, a terrible spectacle was presented to his sight. In the middle of the kitchen stood a large wooden block covered with blood; on one side of the block lay the body of his child, and on the other side his head and a blood-stained hatchet. The mother was sitting by the side in a rocking-chair, and, while rocking herself to and fro, she exclaimed again and again, "I have followed the commandment."

In White's Valley, near Honesdale, Pa., there lived a farmer, named Hecker, whose daughter had imagined for many years past that she had committed a great sin against "her Emmanuel." In order to expiate her transgressions, she built altars on her father's farm, where she sacrificed lambs to reconcile the offended godhead. One day, when Hecker entered his kitchen, he saw, to his terror, the charred body of his daughter on one of her own altars. The unfortunate girl had sacrificed herself to obtain forgiveness for the supposed sin which she imagined she had committed against Emmanuel.

In Transylvania there lived a colonist, Szabo, who for a long time had meditated what sacrifice he should bring to God in order to expiate the injury he had done to the property of a neighbor. As he did not know how to help himself, he asked his wife, his sister and his mother what he should do. They persuaded him to read the Bible carefully, where he would be sure to find the desired advice. He did this, and when he came to the passage describing the sacrifice of Isaac, he decided to perform this sacrifice with his own child, a little girl of three years. On the morning of the 19th of March, 1873, he awoke the child from her sleep and took her with him into the forest. There he knelt down by a tree and prayed fervently for some time, then he undressed his victim and killed her. He prayed again over the dead body, which he buried, and went home contented.

A very similar case to that of Casale occurred in Irkutsk, in Siberia, in the summer of 1875. A man belonging to the Orthodox Church, by continued reading of the Bible, had come to the conclusion that the self-denials of which the Scriptures speak are not sufficient, that, on the

contrary, he would have to pass through all the sufferings which Christ had endured for the salvation of the world. He proceeded exactly like Casale and crucified himself.

One of the many victims of the so-called Evangelist Moody is a young mulatto of 19 years, Edward Williams, who was employed in a business house, and was respected as an honest and faithful young man. In March, 1876, he attended several of the revival meetings which Moody and Sankey were holding in New York. One evening, after one of these meetings, he returned home in a state of frenzy. The next morning he rushed into the office of Dr. Bergh, swinging a sword in his hand, and exclaiming : "Get out from here, I am God ; Mr. Moody sent me to you in the name of Jesus." He was sent to a hospital, and there he continued his ravings : "I see a hundred and fifty thousand angels around the Lamb, and good Mr. Moody is the archangel. Oh ! if I had only a heavenly banjo to accompany the godly Sankey, how beautiful that would be." The poor fellow, who had become completely insane, had to be put in a straight-jacket and removed to an asylum.

In the little city of Kronach, in Germany, three cases of Christian fanaticism occurred in October, 1876. The wife of a tanner was sent to the lunatic asylum because she imagined herself constantly surrounded by angels, and she believed that religion was in danger. A locksmith was in constant communication with the Trinity and with Pontius Pilate ; and a third, a master tailor, had become crazy from fear that the cause of religion was in danger.

Another case of self-crucifixion occurred in May, 1877. Simon Bernik, a groom in the employ of Prince Schwarzenberg, spread himself on the floor of the stable with his

face upwards, and then nailed himself down as upon a cross, wounding himself at the same time in several places with a knife.

In Carondelet, in Missouri, lived a man of the name of Lutner, who, with his wife, had been known for many years as a fanatic. In May, 1877, the door of the house had been closed for many days, during which the singing of psalms and hymns could be heard outside. The neighbors began to be frightened on account of Lutner's little daughter, and went to inform the police. The door had to be forced, as Lutner refused to open it. He answered every question which was put to him with biblical verses, and finally became so furious that he had to be bound, and, together with his wife, who had also become crazy, was led into prison. There they continued to sing hymns, and spit into the face of everybody who approached them. These two people were members of the Lutheran community.

A farmer named Newton became, in 1877, the leader of revival meetings which were held in Phillipton, Mass. He completely lost his reason. He pinned his old father down to the ground, and called upon him to forgive his enemies. He bade an approaching locomotive to stop in the name of God, and he anointed his wife from head to foot with butter, which he said was his religious duty.

Two young girls drowned themselves in the stone well containing the so-called holy water of Marpingen. Their dead bodies arrived on the 18th of August, 1877, in St. John.

In December, 1877, a man 71 years old, near Brownville, Ohio, murdered his daughter by splitting her skull with a hatchet. When he was asked for the motive of



this fearful deed, he replied that she intended to join the Lutheran Church, and that her acquaintance with a man had so much enraged him that he thought it his duty to kill her. He said he had carefully studied the Bible, and he had found there that it was right to kill an adulteress.

In February, 1878, there lived in the neighborhood of Jamestown, Wisconsin, a farmer named Johnson. He and his wife and his brother John became mad at the same time. Johnson and his wife used to get up in the middle of the night, dress themselves in their best clothes, and go into the fields to pray. They continued this for several days without taking care of their five little children or of their cattle. Neighbors who tried to approach them in a kindly spirit were driven back by Johnson, who had armed himself with an axe; his mother and younger brother were not able to induce him to let them take care of their little children, who were crying with cold and hunger, and of the starving cattle. Johnson was finally disarmed, and his children sent to friends.

In 1878, near Uxbridge, Massachusetts, a naked man called Roches was arrested on the high road about midnight. He said that he was going to a missionary meeting, and that on the way he had met the devil, who had looked sharply into his eyes. Roches then remembered that he had something to confess, but he had forgotten what it was; he knew, however, that the only way to deliver himself from the power of the devil was to walk naked a mile backwards; for that reason he had undressed himself and put his clothes in a certain place which he named.

A certain Price, a minister, who lived, in 1879, in Louisiana, imagined that he had to kill people in order to



free himself from the snares of the devil. He went to work in good earnest; he had already seriously wounded one person, and was about shooting another, when he was struck down by a ball.

In June of the same year a milkman named Kemmler, in Holyoke, Mass., killed his three children. When he was asked what was his motive for this deed, he said, "I killed them, and they died and went to heaven." "Why did you not kill yourself?" "That would not have been right, because I should have gone to hell if I had killed myself." "But how could you find the heart to kill your innocent children?" "Should I see that they grew up and went astray. I knew that if they died they would go direct to heaven. I did not want them to get into evil ways. If I had not been a Christian, it would have been a matter of indifference to me."

In Pocasset, Massachusetts, there existed, in 1879, a sect called the Second Adventists. A certain Freeman and his wife thought they would do a work pleasing to God by following the example of Abraham, and sacrificed their little girl, five years old, whom they loved dearly, on the 1st of May, 1879. Freeman pretended to have had a wonderful vision about a week before, and that since then he had not been able to eat or to sleep. The Lord, he said, had commanded him to sacrifice his little daughter, who would rise again in three days. On the day before he sent word through the village that he would communicate a wonderful revelation and bring an orthodox sacrifice. At three o'clock in the afternoon the members of the sect appeared in Freeman's house. Before their arrival he had murdered his child with all kinds of ridiculous antics, which he considered religious ceremonies. The

dead body of the child was lying on a table, which represented the altar, and which was covered with blood. When his friends, who also believed that he had done a righteous work, left the house, he barricaded himself within and began singing religious songs, which he thought would affect the resurrection of his child in three days. All the other followers of the sect approved of the deed committed by Freeman. A child who only a few days before joyfully played about the streets, who had been lying innocently on the sofa while her father and his friends were singing and praying, was cruelly murdered by her father, and her dead body shown to the other fanatics with the words: "I have done it to the glory of God;" and the people around him believed this. The mother and the grandmother of the child stood by and expressed their approval, and said that it was God's immediate command that the child should be sacrificed, and that it would rise again after three days. What a terrible illusion!

In October, 1879, a preacher called Haynes, in Corsicana, Texas, had driven several persons crazy by his sermons. He persuaded his followers that, by his means, Christ would again appear on earth, and that he (Haynes) was able to perform all the miracles which Christ had done. Among those who had lost their reason was another preacher of the name of Goodnight, whom he had persuaded that if he (Goodnight) would sacrifice his little girl, Haynes would raise it again from the dead after three days. Two women of good family had likewise lost their reason in consequence of Haynes' preaching.

In the year 1879 there existed in Wosnessensk, in Russia, a certain sect which had seceded from the Orthodox

Church, and which called itself the "Stundists." Great efforts were made to induce them to return to the Orthodox Church. For this purpose several hundred members of the Orthodox Church dragged a number of Stundists, and intimidated them by threats until a portion of them declared that they would return to the Church, and in case they should again secede they would subject themselves to receive five hundred lashes. Some of them resisted, however, and were most cruelly beaten with rods and scourges. Among these was a married couple of the name of Schunenko, who had to endure great sufferings from the fanaticism of their opponents. The woman, after having received more than one hundred lashes, was hung up by her hair. She still persisted in her refusal to return to the Church, and again received a number of lashes. The physician who examined her declared that if this torment had lasted a little longer the woman would have died under her sufferings.

An Adventist preacher named Buck, living in a miserable shanty near New Hampton, Iowa, gained his living by pretending to heal the sick by laying on of hands. One day loud cries of pain were heard proceeding from Buck's house. Looking through a crack in the door the neighbors saw that Buck was beating his son most cruelly, around whose neck he had tied a rope. The poor boy begged his father not to kill him. Since then the boy has disappeared, and it is most likely that Buck, who belonged to the same class of fanatics as Freeman, in Massachusetts, has sacrificed the child.

In Castle Grove, Iowa, in January, 1880, a Mrs. Ira Steward was just about butchering her child on an altar, when fortunately some friends arrived and prevented her.

In 1880 a woman fasted for forty days, as she said, according to the command of God, and became mad in consequence of it.

In the beginning of March, 1880, the following advertisement appeared in the *Brooklyn Eagle*: "Wanted, a Christian-minded man who is willing and ready to die for Christ. Apply No. — Dean Street." A number of people who had read the advertisement thought that a Christian-minded man was wanted for some work. They went to the house and were not a little terrified when they found a man who intended to follow the example of Abraham, and was looking for somebody to sacrifice.

A Mrs. Caroline Frazier, who, in March, 1880, had attended several revival meetings in New York, had been put into such a state of excitement by them that she refused to take any food for the sake of saving her soul. She persisted in this for several weeks, lost her reason, and died soon afterwards.

In 1880 there lived in Clarksville, Kentucky, a certain Dan Lyle, with his wife and an Hungarian woman named Susan Talley. Lyle proclaimed that he was Christ, his wife was the Virgin Mary, and Talley a prophetess. He appeared in several churches and wanted to preach, which of course he was not allowed to do. When they tried to arrest him he, armed with an axe, made a violent resistance. When he was finally overcome and they entered his house, they perceived a strong smell of decaying flesh, and in searching the house they found the dead bodies of three children, of two, three, and five years of age respectively, whom Lyle had killed by breaking their necks.

A Mrs. Frick, in Stuttgart, attempted suicide in August, 1880. She stabbed herself in several places, and washed

her children with the blood flowing from her wounds, exclaiming that the body and blood of Jesus Christ could help her no more, and that she was lost.

A Sanctificationist in Dallas, Texas, in January, 1881, built an immense wooden cross, and, believing that he was a second Christ, took it on his shoulders and set out on a pilgrimage to the East. He was arrested and induced to burn the cross and go home.

A reformer named Matlock appeared in Arkansas in the summer of 1881. His theory was that in order to attain eternal life it was necessary to shed blood. In August of the same year he murdered a planter named Miller. By the exertions of his lawyer he was acquitted. Shortly afterwards his dead body was found hanging on a tree.

In November, 1881, a fisherman, Josiah Smith, in Santa Anna, California, thought that he had heard the voice of Jehovah, which commanded him, as Abraham, to kill his child. Smith, armed with a knife, took his son, fourteen years old, and waited for a moment to receive a counter-command, and when this did not come he killed the child.

A machinist, Enos Silvester, in 1882, was under the hallucination that Christ had asked him to sacrifice his son. One night the neighbors were aroused by the cries of Mrs. Silvester, and when they rushed to the house they found him in the act of binding his son, to burn him at a stake which he had erected in one of the rooms. He was arrested and taken to a lunatic asylum.

A Miss Sarah Elstone committed suicide in Canada in 1882. She burnt herself to death on a pile which she herself had built, leaving a letter in which she declared that she was tired of life, and had determined to sacrifice herself. Her last words were: "I am going to Jesus."

Three people lost their reason in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1882, in consequence of the revival meetings held by the so-called boy preacher, Harrison. The last of these cases was that of a Miss Emmons, who became a raving maniac, although before she had taken part in those proceedings she possessed full reasoning power.

In December, 1882, a woman was found in Siegen, in Westphalia, lying in a most filthy state in bed, which she had not left for six years, admitting into her room only a boy who brought her something to eat. When she was asked to rise she said she could not do this until a certain K——, a man belonging to the Anabaptists, came and commanded her to rise. She had covered every object in the room with biblical passages, relating mostly to the redemption.

Professor Wilson, in St. Louis, in January, 1883, began to starve himself to death because, he said, God had commanded him to do so.

A farmer, Mick, in Bloomington, Ill., who had lost his reason through brooding over the Bible, in January, 1883, expressed his intention of sacrificing his son for the salvation of the world. His neighbors prevented him from carrying out this horrible deed, and he was overpowered after violent resistance.

In the same month, near Reading, Pa., a man was seen kneeling on the drift ice of the Schuylkill river. After some resistance on his part he was brought to the land. He said that God had commanded him to pray. He tore himself away and rushed into the water, where he was drowned.

A Mrs. Zenwirk, in Milwaukee, in January, 1883, sacrificed her three little girls, aged respectively four years,



twenty months, and four months. She was about to hang herself, but was surprised and prevented. Day after day she had been found with a prayer-book in her hand, totally neglecting her household duties. When she was asked why she had committed this horrible deed, she replied: "I have read in a good book that it is right to sacrifice children."

In the same month a certain Southwick, in Charlotte, Michigan, was about to shoot his family because, he said, God had commanded him to do so.

In February, 1883, a man named Jesse Wilhelm died in the lunatic asylum, Norristown, Pennsylvania. The clergyman whose church he had attended had preached that it was sinful to work on a Sunday. On one Sunday Wilhelm saw his boat, which had sprung a leak, and which he might have repaired in five minutes, sinking before his eyes, because he was afraid to sin against the Sunday law. The same clergyman had repeatedly declared that Protestants and those belonging to the Reformed Church would go to hell. This made such an impression upon the man, whose mother and sisters were Protestants, that he lost his reason.

In June, 1883, the tailor Genz, in Butzdorf, Germany, murdered his sleeping wife with the blade of a scythe, which he drove into her head. He then sat down by her bed praying, and said that the angel Gabriel had commanded him to kill his wife.

A laborer named Hicks, in Charleston, Illinois, in August, 1883, conceived that one of his children was Christ returned to earth, and would have to suffer death on the cross. He infected his wife and two of his children with the same idea. They set about to make a cross, and



were just about to perform the crucifixion when they were prevented by neighbors.

In the middle of the year 1883 Sylvester Knott, a farmer, living in an isolated spot on the shore of Lake Erie, attended a meeting of the so-called Salvation Army at Franklin. He became very much excited, and finally insane. For weeks he wandered up and down the shore, declaiming on dogmatical themes, picturing the horrors of the Judgment Day, and calling upon sinners to worship or be eternally lost. On September 1st, he planted a large cross in the woods upon which he crucified his eight-year-old son, believing the boy would be tormented in hell-fire forever unless he died the death of Jesus. With almost superhuman strength Knott held the lad firmly while driving a large nail through one of the little fellow's hands, perfectly regardless of his piteous cries for mercy. The dreadful work was interrupted by some wood-cutters who happened to be passing. Leaving his son hanging on a nail, Knott fled, first striking down one of the rescuers with the hammer. At midnight the crazy man returned, smashed in the door of his house, and knocked his wife insensible at a single blow. Entering a chamber in which his only daughter, a girl of seventeen years, lay asleep, he bound her hand and foot and carried her to a lonely place in the forest where cords of wood were piled. An altar was quickly built, and upon it the madman secured the girl. "Even as Abraham did with Isaac, will I offer you as a burnt offering unto God," chanted the madman, setting the funeral pyre on fire. The flames soon reached the limbs of the girl, whose shrieks of agony and prayers for a more merciful death were music to the fanatic's ears. Dancing around the heap on which lay the girl, he

implored the Almighty to accept the sacrifice as an atonement for the sinful deeds committed by him in past years. He added fresh fuel to the altar. But help arrived in time to prevent the consummation of the fearful design. Two young men, crossing the woods on their way home from a party, saw a bright light and heard the girl's screams. One felled the father while his companion scattered the blazing wood and lifted the girl from her fiery bed. The cords that bound her limbs were transferred to those of the maniac. The girl's legs were already badly burned, and there were large blisters on her arms, shoulders and sides. After her rescue she raved night and day, and probably has been sent, together with her fanatic father, to an insane asylum.

In Irwin, a small place in Schuyler county, Ill., a sect called "The Pilgrims" had just finished a little church, which was to be consecrated within a few weeks. But this was a thorn in the eyes of another sect, and during the night of September 8th, 1883, the little church was blown up with powder. There is no doubt that the intentions of the fanatical criminals had been to destroy, together with the building, the life of the pastor, who used to sleep there; but he had slept that night in another house and thus his life was saved.

All this is eloquent testimony of the mischief done by Christian fanaticism. We may look all over the world, and nowhere shall we find such bigotry and intolerance as in the Christian Church. In India, on the banks of the Indus and Ganges, in China, and in Japan, there live people who belong to different creeds, and pray before different altars. Yet they do not hate or persecute each other because one worships Brahma, another Buddha, another

Christna, or follows the doctrines of Con-fu-tse. In all countries where Christianity prevails it is different ; there we must go to find fanaticism.

For centuries past Christian fanaticism and the difference of opinion on questions pertaining to the Church have been the cause of unheard of cruelties, have shed streams of blood, and devastated flourishing countries for generations to come,—all this under the foolish idea that Christianity is better than all other creeds, and that within Christianity itself each sect possesses alone the true faith, and that all who believe differently must be forced into being converted. Under no flag have such terrible cruelties been committed as under the sign of the cross ; and all different denominations are alike in this. The reformers Luther and Calvin were fanatics like the rest. Calvin caused Servetus to be burnt ; and Luther, when the German peasants tried to shake off their hard yoke, called on the princes to kill them like mad dogs. He also represented that the best actions of men were worth nothing if they did not believe every word of the Bible. It was he who resisted Zwingli's reasonable explanation of the Communion, and would not allow the words : “ This *means* my body, and this *means* my flesh,” to be introduced into the service ; it was he who believed in a personal devil and rejected free inquiry with the words : “ Reason is the devil's whore.”

Much blood has been shed by Christian fanaticism, and it may boast of having written the history of Christianity in letters of blood ; and if, to-day, they no longer burn heretics, it is not the merit of Christianity, or because Christianity has made the world more humane, but it is because humanity and civilization have overcome the barbarism of Christianity.

But if we have no more *bloody* persecutions, Christian fanaticism has not yet disappeared, but carries on its persecutions in a different manner, as has been seen by the outrages committed against the Jews in late years, and in the refusal of burials of such persons as belong to different sects from those who own the burial-ground. The most revolting scenes have occurred on such occasions, and Christian fanaticism does not only attack the living but also the dead, who are no longer troubled by denominational scruples.

We have given sufficient proof of how Christian fanaticism has destroyed every happiness in the lives of individuals and of families. How often has it sown dissent between husband and wife, between children and their parents, and made fathers and mothers the murderers of their children, under the illusion that they were doing an act pleasing to God. Many people it has deprived of their reason and driven into mad-houses. An examination made by Dr. Crowell, of Brooklyn, in 1877, proved that in the course of one year, in fifty-eight lunatic asylums of the United States, four hundred and twelve patients had been received who had lost their reason by brooding over the Bible and the dogmas of the Church. During a certain number of years nineteen hundred and ninety-four victims of similar illusions have been sent to fill mad-houses. According to a report published in 1880 by the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane two hundred and thirty-six patients had been received who had lost their reason through the same cause. It has been proved beyond contradiction that the so-called religious revivals have greatly contributed towards producing religious madness. When Moody and Sankey held their

revival meetings in the Hippodrome in New York scarcely a day passed by that some unfortunate victim had not to be sent to an insane asylum. The same observations have been made during the revival meetings of Mrs. Van Cott. The same has occurred in other places; for instance, in Louisville, Ky., on the occasion of the revival meetings of G. O. Barnes, a poor woman, who was the mother of twins, completely lost her reason. She had called one of her children Jesus Christ, and the other G. O. Barnes. She said that Barnes had taught her to make a certain "Holy Oil" with which she would heal the sick, that it was her task to convert all unbelievers in Louisville, and when she had accomplished this she would ascend with her children to heaven in a fiery chariot. If so many people have lost their reason in brooding over the contradictions and mystifications of the Bible, and over the sophistry which priests have invented to explain them, and, in their attempt to reconcile dogmas with reason, we cannot wonder that such exercises as those of Moody and Sankey considerably increase these mischievous effects.

If we ask ourselves what is fanaticism, the answer would be, fanaticism is a false kind of enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is something noble, fanaticism is something ignoble. We can only grow enthusiastic over something which we can understand, something which we can love and honor; whilst fanaticism arises from the dark brooding over things that are incomprehensible, things which we cannot understand, which we fear, and which drive us to hatred and persecution. But the time of hatred and persecution will end. That these revivals are at all possible, and that they are everywhere received by the priests with open arms, is only a proof that the priests, by themselves, can no

longer resist the powerful invasion of constantly increasing free-thought, and think they have found help in these revivals, which really may be compared to the last flaring up of a flame before its final extinction. Christianity is near its end; mankind has outgrown a doctrine which contains so many and such great errors, and it must perish to make way for a purer, more sublime, more blissful view of God and things divine.

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### Belief in Devils and Witches, and Superstition.

The well-known Dutch church historian Rauwenhoff, at the conclusion of the second volume of his work, says: "Christian theology really consists of two parts, and it is a question of doubt as to which of the two the greatest importance has been attached,—the belief in God or the belief in the devil. Nature and mankind were supposed to be subject to one as well as to the other. As God had his angels and good spirits to save men, the devil had his evil spirits to lead them to destruction. As God filled the pious with his spirit and endowed them with miraculous power, the devil selected his favorites among men and gave them supernatural gifts to do evil and to cause mischief. The Church made it her task to destroy the work of the devil, and carried on war against all who were supposed to be in alliance with him. The manner in which this was done surpasses everything which human cruelty has ever perpetrated upon innocent victims. Witchery was an extraordinary crime and demanded extraordinary means to suppress it,—namely, a suspension of all common



justice towards those who were suspected of it. No means were neglected to procure a conviction of the accused; the most senseless, the most immoral tests were applied to decide upon life or death. It is impossible to relate here all that was considered suspicious; indeed, everything was tried that could be tried. If once suspicion had fallen upon an unfortunate being, the ecclesiastical courts had won the game. Torture and imprisonment put the unhappy beings into such a state of excitement that they confessed even the most senseless things. Girls of eight years were forced to admit that they had had carnal intercourse with the devil, and had borne children to him. Old women admitted that they had killed persons who were actually alive and in good health. Any further evidence that might be wanted was supplied by the helpers of the Inquisition, who were always ready to earn blood-money by the death of an innocent victim. And in all cases the verdict was invariably the same,—the stake. The civil authorities not only consented to these horrors but assisted, and did not scruple to receive two-thirds of the property of the condemned, which, according to the law on witchcraft, belonged to the sovereign. One might feel inclined to believe that all this could only be said about the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, but truth compels us to acknowledge that, in this respect, Protestantism was by no means behind Catholicism—yes, that with the former the superstition was even of a more dogmatic and oppressive nature.”

Catholics and Protestants have taken an equal share in this superstition and in the crimes proceeding from it, and both must be accused of being guilty. Even to-day the belief in devils and witches bears its poisonous blossoms



among the people. Luther carried the belief in the devil, in all its brutality, from the Catholic faith into the Protestant. He believed that the whole world was peopled by a host of angels and demons. Satan plays an important part in all his writings. When he is sick he is tormented by the devil; he believes that the devil brought monstrosities to women in childbirth, and demanded that this devilish brood should be drowned. And as Luther himself believed in the devil, so did also those who followed his doctrine. Every extraordinary occurrence in nature, every thunder- or hail-storm, every atmospheric phenomenon, sickness and pestilence, locusts and vermin, war and rebellion, were, according to the belief of the people, works of the devil. It is a well-known fact that when Luther was detained in the Wartburgh he threw an inkstand at the head of the devil, whom he imagined he saw.

The belief in the devil exists in the Christian Church to this day. Christian theology has not been able to elevate itself above this hideous superstition. By most of the different sects he is supposed to be the first of the fallen angels, and relying upon certain passages in the Bible referring to the devil, the Church teaches that God thrust him and a host of other angels out of heaven as a punishment for their crimes. His malice has brought sin, death, and every evil into the world. He rules supreme over the other fallen angels, and God permits him to tempt man and to take possession of him.

How predominant the belief in the devil still is among the people is proved by the circumstance that literature is constantly busy with the subject; even within the last few years a number of books about the devil have been published in France, England, Germany and other countries.

The belief in witches, and trials for witchcraft has its origin in the Christian belief in a devil. The influence of the devil was recognized in certain diseases (being possessed of the devil); and the belief in spirits bringing disease had gradually developed into the idea that sickness was, in many cases, the work of wicked people, gifted with supernatural power. This was the origin of the belief in witches. It was thought that witches were under the immediate influence of the devil and of the host of demons which filled the world, and that they were their instruments to cause evil. When the Church accepted this belief, then began those fearful horrors caused by the belief in witches and the trials for witchcraft, which for centuries have disgraced the world, and which, even to-day, have not entirely died out. Terribly, and as a pestilence, raged this madness. Infectious, as a plague, it visited certain districts and certain towns and demanded its victims, which, upon the most contemptible denunciation, were tortured, convicted and surrendered to the stake. The entire Christian Church, Protestants and Catholics, have rivaled with each other to take part in these horrors, and to sacrifice thousands of innocent people to this fantastic illusion. The entire thought of the Christian world was poisoned by this superstition. No matter what misfortune happened, what injury or wrong was done in any community, it was ascribed to witches.

The non-Christian world was saved from this pestilence. Neither the Sanscrit nations nor the Parsees know of any communion between men and evil spirits, or if they believed it, they did not punish it as a crime. This madness is known alone to Christian nations, and raged among them more terribly and more hideously, and demanded as

many victims as the so-called religious wars and the Inquisition. The entire Christian Church has taken part in these horrors; not one sect can reproach the other in this respect; all threw themselves with hellish rage and blind zeal upon the persecution of the witches. It was Pope Innocent VIII. who first declared a union with the devil to be a crime, but the Protestants took up the persecution of the witches with such zeal, and carried it to such perfection, that Protestantism is responsible before the court of reason and humanity; and they have not even the excuse of having been carried away in the general turmoil, and to have accepted the Catholic inheritance without looking at it.

Let us glance at a few incidents of this persecution which are recorded in history.

More than four hundred witches were tried, and one-half of them executed in Carcassonne, in France, from 1320 to 1350. In 1357 there were thirty-one executions.

In Toulouse six hundred witches were condemned from 1330 to 1350.

The list of the execution of witches and wizards, given by Hutchinson, in his work on that subject, must cause horror. In the sixteenth century, the State prisons had no room to receive those accused of witchcraft. After the Bull of Innocent VIII., in 1484, which was confirmed by Hadrian VI., in 1523, this devilish persecution was carried on wholesale. A certain Cumanus in Burlia, Italy, burnt forty-one in one year; in Piedmont more than one hundred were executed. In 1515 more than five hundred were executed in Geneva within three months.

In the district of Como, one thousand perished in the year 1524. In Ravensburg forty-eight were killed within

four years. Remigius burnt nine hundred in Lorraine in fifteen years. In Salem, England, sixteen were hanged in 1692, and one hundred and fifty were imprisoned in the same year. The historian Lecky, in his history of witchcraft, says: "It is impossible to calculate how many thousands perished as victims of this illusion." The Bishop of Bamberg condemned seven thousand eight hundred in one year in Wurzburg. Great numbers perished in every large city of France; one judge boasted that in sixteen years he had condemned eight hundred witches. One author says that a large number were executed in Paris within a few months.

In the sixteenth century forty-two were executed in Rotweil, and seventy one in the seventeenth century.

One hundred and fifty-two in Thaun, in the Sundgau, from 1572 to 1620.

Thirty-four from 1579 to 1611, in Fribourg, in the Breisgau.

In the diocese of Treves, under the Bishop John, only two persons remained alive in two villages, and three hundred and sixty-eight perished in twenty-two other villages.

In 1589 one hundred and thirty-three witches were burnt in one day in Quedlinburg.

From 1590 to 1600 from ten to twelve witches were burned on many days in the Duchy of Brunswick; the stakes outside the city looked almost like a forest.

In Ellingen, sixty-five were burnt in 1590 within eight months.

In Wiesenburg, twenty-five.

In Noerdlingen, thirty-two.

In Ingelfingen, thirteen.

In the Canton of Berne three hundred and eleven were burnt from 1591 to 1600, from 1601 to 1610 two hundred and forty, sixty in 1613 and seventy-five in 1616.

Twenty-three in 1596 in Windsheim.

In Muttich and Amerbach, in the diocese of Mayence, three hundred were burned in 1602.

In December, 1608, several women were burnt in Broughton, Scotland; some of them attempted to escape from the flames, but were seized and thrown back.

In Chillon, twenty-seven in four months in 1613.

From 1615 to 1635 more than five thousand were burned in the diocese of Strassburg.

In Wurzburg, more than two hundred perished from 1622 to 1629. According to another report nine hundred.

Six hundred in the diocese of Bamberg, from 1625 to 1659.

Thirty-six in Drieberg in 1627. Another report says eighty-five.

In the same year three hundred in Gross-Krotzenburg and Briergel.

In Wurzburg one hundred and fifty-seven from 1627 to 1629.

In Offenburg sixty from 1627 to 1631.

In Schlettstadt seventy-two from 1629 to 1632.

In Briedingen sixty-four in 1633, and fifty in 1634.

Nine hundred women suffered death for witchcraft in Lorraine in the seventeenth century.

From 1640 until the Restoration from three to four thousand people perished in Great Britain for witchcraft. Addy estimates the number of those executed in Scotland alone at several thousand.

Thirty were burned in Lindheim between 1640 and 1651.

Trials for witchcraft in America date from 1645, and appeared first in Connecticut and in Boston, where three women were executed during that year. One woman was executed in Boston in 1655, another in Hadley in 1662. For thirty years no executions took place, until the persecution broke out again in 1685 in the neighborhood of Boston, in isolated cases, until in Salem it appeared like an epidemic. From February to June, 1692, the prisons were overcrowded with the accused, and in June, July and August, a great number of women were condemned and executed. The rage of persecution increased day by day, and it is impossible to say how many people fell victims to this miserable superstition. At last the people came to their senses and seemed to discover how gravely they had sinned. On January 14th, 1696, a general day of fasting and humiliation was observed, to pray to God for forgiveness for these horrors. The originators of all the terrible crimes were Christian and Puritan ministers, the same who to this day take a leading position in the United States, and, in their Christian pride and bigotry, look down with contempt on every one who does not share their opinion, and who try by all possible means to impede intellectual progress and lend a willing hand to enslave public opinion and personal liberty.

In 1627 the daughter of the postmaster, Enoch, in Cologne, after being put on the rack three times, had to ascend the stake. She had been accused by the nuns of St. Clara, who were supposed to be possessed by the devil, to have been guilty of witchcraft.

In 1651 forty-two women were burned in Neisse.

About one thousand people were burnt in Franconia in 1659, particularly in the dioceses of Wurzburg and Bamberg.

Twenty-four people in 1665 in the Vaudois.

Seventy-two women and fifteen children in Mora, Sweden, in 1669.

In Northampton, England, two women were hanged in 1705, and five in 1712.

Thirteen witches were burned in 1728 in Szegedin, Hungary.

The sub-prioress of the Convent of Unterzell, Renata Sieger, was burnt in Wurzburg in 1729.

In 1737 a weak-minded woman named Catharine Kalbacher accused, at the request of a Jesuit priest, in Lucerne, the seventy-year old Lisi Bossard and her four daughters, also Catharine Gilli, Max Stadlin, with his wife and daughter, and seven other people of witchcraft. The old woman Bossard and her daughters, and the woman Stadlin, after having been tortured with red-hot tongs, were burned.

A fourteen-year old girl was burned in Landshut in 1756; she was accused of having been the cause of a violent thunder-storm.

A girl of thirteen years was executed in Landshut in 1754.

In 1782 Anna Goldin was beheaded in Glarus.

The preceding list, which goes down to the end of the eighteenth century, gives only a very imperfect picture of all the horrors which have been committed during the persecution of witches, and we may get a still better idea from a consideration of the following:

The blood-judge Balzer Voss, in Fulda, boasted that he alone had burned seven hundred witches, and he hoped to bring it to a thousand. The blood-judge Benedict Karpzow (1648-50) boasted that he had signed about



twenty thousand death warrants. The town-clerk Voigt, of Quedlinburg, wrote in a Berlin magazine of 1784 that a rough estimate of the number of victims who were sacrificed to this superstition would amount to about one million; Dr. Niehus, in Munster, estimates the number at from three to four millions; another historian goes as far as nine millions. The wholesale persecution, as has been shown above, was by no means confined to Germany. It occurred at an earlier date in France; and in Switzerland, Italy, Spain, England, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and America this moral pestilence raged with equal fury.

In our enlightened nineteenth century, even within the last years, this superstition has found its victims.

In 1819 three women strangled a woman, Miszewska, whom they declared to be a witch, near Jastrzembic.

In 1830, in the south of France, a mob seized an old woman whom they accused of having poisoned the cattle. To force her to cure the beasts she was held over a fire until she was tormented to death.

In 1836 a woman was drowned as a witch in Zeinova on the peninsula of Hela.

In 1850 a suit was brought in Tarbes, in France, against a married couple, Soubervie, for the murder of a woman,—Bedouret. They had taken this woman, whom a priest had pointed out as a witch who was supposed to have caused the sickness of Mme. Soubervie, and held her over burning straw, and put a red-hot iron on her mouth, and thus tormented her to death. The murderers were condemned to four months' imprisonment, and an annual payment of twenty-five francs to the husband of the murdered woman.

In 1860 a woman was burned as a witch in Carnargo, Mexico.

In 1866 a young lady was arrested as a witch in the Rhenish province of Prussia, because she kept a tame pigeon.

In 1868, in the same province, a weaver, whose child was suffering from spasms, tried to shoot an old woman, whom he suspected of having bewitched the child. The gun missed fire, and this very fact strengthened his idea that the woman was a witch.

In June, 1868, a trial for witchcraft took place in Zistersdorf, Austria.

In 1874, in Aix-la-Chapelle, a woman was accused of witchcraft; another in Munchen-Gladbach, and another in Viersen, all in the Rhine province. Another trial for witchcraft took place in the same year in Zweibrucken.

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1874, Diega Luzo and her son, and Jose Bonitta and his wife were burnt as witches and sorcerers in St. Sinalva, Mexico.

In the same year a similar crime was committed in Alamenca, Peru. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of August the Christian Indians celebrated the Feast of the Ascension of Mary, and with their justice of the peace at their head they determined to enhance the festivities of the day by roasting over a slow fire an unfortunate man, Mariano Surcamay, who was suspected of sorcery. They tied him to a post and piled wood around him, to which they set fire. When the flames leaped forth the whole company went to the house of the justice of the peace to celebrate their heroic deed. Two hours afterwards the host reminded his guests that wizards were not easily killed; they would go and see if he was still alive. Indeed, the unfortunate man was not

yet dead. Then the judge himself took a knife and cut off his head, with the words, "He shall not escape this time," and he ordered the remaining part of the body to be thrown to the dogs.

In 1875 the wife of a mayor in Upper Alsace, who, at the same time, was a deputy to the local diet, grew very sick. He thought that she was bewitched, and, instead of calling in a physician, he consulted a conjuror, who, in conjunction with a nine days' devotional service, was to cure her. On the 4th of April, 1875, a case was tried before the police court of Aix-la-Chapelle about a bewitched cow. The cow was healed again by certain proceedings in which sacred objects and a priest played the principal part.

In Warwickshire, England, in 1875, a certain Haywood killed an old woman whom he declared to be a witch. During the examination of the witnesses it was discovered that about one-third of the population believed in witches, and that they were of the opinion that fourteen other witches were living in the village.

In New Albany, Indiana, in 1877, attention was called to a Mrs. Zeller, who declared that sick persons had been bewitched, and who pretended to be able to cure them. She had found a number of people who believed in her, and things went so far that certain houses were avoided because it was believed the inhabitants were bewitched. A baker, Meisenhelder, refused to serve bread to certain people whom he declared to be bewitched.

A Dutch family residing in Paterson, New Jersey, in 1878, accused an old woman of having bewitched two of the daughters. One of them had been bewitched some months ago, but had been exorcised by a Catholic priest.

In 1879 a woman was burned as a witch in the Russian village Wratschewo. The authorities of the village had the doors and windows of her house nailed up; they surrounded it with wood and straw, and set fire to it to burn the witch and her house. The village priest was present at this outrage.

In St. Blazery, England, a woman died in 1880 who had been accused of witchcraft, and nobody could be found who would assist in burying her. At last two workmen offered to carry her to the church yard. The belief that she was a witch was so firmly rooted among the people that the whole village breathed more freely after her death, and a poor cripple who thought that he had been bewitched by her imagined that he would now get well.

In February, 1880, a woman was burnt by her neighbors in the Government of Novgorod, Russia. They accused her of having bewitched their cattle and their children. The criminals were acquitted because it was said in II. Moses, xxii. 18, that it was right to kill a witch.

In Stangenwalde, a village in the neighborhood of Dantzic, lived a woman who was considered a witch by the whole neighborhood. In September, 1881, a woman living in the same village returned with a lame horse from the market. Just before the house in which the alleged witch lived the overtired animal stopped and refused to go further. This of course was the fault of the witch; and the woman, her husband and her mother-in-law entered the house, pulled the witch out of her bed and ill-used her, to force her to cure the horse. The tormented woman called for help and alarmed the neighbors. A number of people surrounded the woman and her tormentors, but not to protect her, but to sneer at her and

abuse her still more. One had gone to get a razor to open her veins, and one had put a rope around her neck, when a physician, who was passing by, delivered her from her tormentors.

A trial for witchcraft took place in Elbing, Prussia, in January, 1881. A shoemaker named Kottlewski, accused a woman of bewitching the sick daughter of a neighbor, and, as the attempt to drive out the devil was not successful, on the first of October Kottlewski entered the house of the witch with the words: "Praised be Jesus Christ," and asked the woman to heal the child. When she declared that she could not do this, and that she had not bewitched the girl, Kottlewski abused her in the most brutal manner.

In Aschaffenburg there lived, in 1881, a married couple who possessed two little pigs, both of which died. This of course must have been done by witchcraft, and they accused one of their neighbors of having bewitched the animals. Their suit was of course dismissed, but the plaintiffs were not satisfied with this and appealed to a higher court, as in their opinion it was not possible that such a just cause could be lost.

A cattle disease broke out in Hungary in 1882. Of course this was done by witchcraft. The whole village went to the church-yard and disinterred the bodies of an old woman and an old man, whom the watchman pretended to have seen leave their graves every night. On the next day they all went again, accompanied by the priest, the schoolmaster and the justice, and disinterred the body of the village cowherd, who had only recently died. The body was burned after the heart had been taken out, whereupon the priest performed a consecration.

In 1883 a little child became sick, in Forup, Germany, and the mother pretended that the child had been bewitched. To drive out the evil spirit they made a large coal fire and held the child over it until the spirit had departed, that is to say, until it was dead.

About three years ago, a little child fell sick in Schoenebeck, Prussia. The father took it into his head that the child had been bewitched by a woman from whom, from time to time, it had received apples and pears, and that the child could only be cured by drinking the blood of the woman. The woman was waylaid and compelled to have blood drawn from her, which was given to the sick child.

The following case occurred in Bay City, Michigan, in 1883. Dr. Bratenburg assured the mother of a sick child that she had been bewitched before its birth, and that the spell, descending to the little one, could not be removed for less than seven dollars. After getting the money he wrote on a sheet of paper, folded it triangularly, enclosed it in a bag and hung it around the child's neck. Death ensued in consequence of medical neglect. The manuscript was found to be as follows: "William John Warner will regain his health in the name of the Lord, God Father, God Son, and God Holy Ghost, Amen. \* \* \* I. N. \* \* N. I. \* Beelzebub and all the bad spirits, I forbid you my bedstead in the name of God, my house and also my yard. I forbid you, in the name of the Holy Trinity, my blood and flesh, my body and soul. I forbid you, as many times as we have nail-holes in my house, as many times as drops in the water, as many times as leaves on the trees, as many times as stars in the heavens, until the last day of Judgment arrives, and Mary, the mother of God, gives birth to her second son. In the name of God

Father, God Son, and God Holy Ghost, thou arch-fiend, thou hast taken hold of our William John. Go hence, I beseech you, for the sake of the five wounds of Jesus Christ, go out this very hour."

As late as January 6th, 1884, a case of exorcism occurred in Switzerland, the party in which the devil was said to have taken up his abode being an eighteen-year old girl, who lived in Hemberg, in the canton of St. Gallen. The priest vigorously attacked his devilship, making use of holy water as well as of other means of conjuration, and succeeded so well that not only the "devil" but life itself left the body of the poor girl.

These dates, which come down to the latest times, give the humiliating proof that even to-day the belief in witches has not disappeared. And if the words of the Bible, in II. Moses, xxii. 18,—“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live,” upon which the persecutions of former centuries were based, are considered as authority, we find that to-day among the uneducated the belief in witches, with all its stupidity and brutality, is still in existence. In Tyrol it is the custom to this day to burn them out in the Walpurgis Night; in the Palatinate they are whipped out, in Franconia they are driven out with trumpets. The idea that sickness can be healed by sorcery and driving out of evil spirits has by no means died out.

By the side of the belief in witches and devils we meet, in the life of Christian nations, a third kind of mental aberration, which, if it has not caused so much bloodshed as the first two, has worked, and is still working, a great deal of mischief,—namely, *superstition*.

Frederick the Great called superstition a child of fear, of weakness, and of indecision. This is true, but it is not



exhaustive. The root of the evil lies deeper. Superstition is the child of a belief in miracles, for it presupposes supernatural effects, which are contradictory to the laws of nature. The belief in the alleged miracles of Christianity is the root of superstition. Both superstition and the belief in dogmas and miracles are twin brothers. Every superstition is a belief in miracles, for it is based upon an arbitrary violation of natural laws by supernatural powers, and in its different directions it follows a tendency to use the miracle for worldly purposes. As by the belief in dogmas the spirit is shrouded in darkness, so that it loses the liberty of independent thought, the same effect is produced by superstition. Let us consider only a few instances of specifically Christian superstition. First, that Friday is a day of ill luck, and, secondly, that when thirteen sit down to a meal one of them must die in the course of a year.

The superstition that Friday is a day of ill luck originates in the legend that Jesus was crucified on a Friday. The seaman will not start on a voyage on a Friday, the builder will not sign a contract or begin a building, the man of business will not set out on a journey, and the farmer will not sow his seed on a Friday. How can the circumstance that Jesus was crucified nineteen hundred years ago on a Friday have any effect upon the voyage of the sailor, the building of the architect, the journey of a business man, or the seed of the farmer? Where are here cause and effect? And yet an effect is impossible without a cause. Will the sailor suffer shipwreck, will the building fall down, will the man of business be unsuccessful or meet with an accident because Jesus was crucified on a Friday nineteen hundred years ago? Indeed, he who

believes in such things gives terrible evidence of a weak mind.

As to the superstition of thirteen sitting down at a meal,—namely, that one of them will die within the year,—it is as foolish as the other. Does the life of man depend upon such accidents? What influence can the circumstance that Jesus, just before his death, sat down to a meal with his twelve apostles have upon the life of a man who to-day, after nineteen hundred years, sits down to a meal with twelve other persons? Where, again, are cause and effect? And yet we find this contemptible superstition not only among the uneducated but also among people of the so-called educated classes. Indeed, it is painful to see how the lady of the house, if by an accident thirteen should sit down to a meal, will torment herself how to get over this terrible thing. It is humiliating to witness such a thing among educated people, and one can only be astonished to see educated women exposing themselves by such miserable superstition. There exist many other kinds of superstition to which women, who are regular church attendants, still adhere. What shall we think when we enter a house and find a lady trying to read her fortune in cards, or when we see them in elegant carriages drive to the house of a fortune-teller? These are incidents of which the nineteenth century ought to be ashamed, and all of which have their origin in the want of true religion.

Can there be any greater testimony of superstition than the worship of saints—the belief that in certain affairs of life we ought to address ourselves to certain saints? St. Aja is to help in lawsuits; St. Cyprian cures the gout; St. Roch, pestilence; St. Benedict, poison; St. Florian helps us in danger from fire; St. Ulrich keeps rats and

mice away ; St. Blaize cures sore throats ; St. Appollonia cures toothache, unless it proceeds from a state of pregnancy, in which case people have to address themselves to St. Margaret, who also helps women through the labors of childbirth ; St. Valentine cures epilepsy ; St. Nepomuk prevents inundations and also slander ; St. Lucy cures eye diseases ; St. Petronella, the fever ; St. Hubert, hydrophobia ; St. Leonard, cattle disease, etc.

Superstition shows itself in many other cases. It is believed that one can make a mortal enemy fall sick, or even kill him, by singing for three consecutive Sundays spiritual songs and one of the anathemas behind the altar of the church, or by sacrificing something on the altar or singing a certain spiritual song for a whole year, mornings and evenings. Is it possible to imagine that by singing and praying we can harm a fellow-creature ? What a terrible illusion ! Voodooism is still practiced to this day in the highest circle of white society in New Orleans. The Lithuanians ask of their Evangelical priests to pray that their enemies may be struck by sickness ; in cases of sickness in their own family, they ask for a few drops of the communion wine, or they ask for the cup with which they go into the church and murmur some prayers into it. Dr. Mannhardt, who relates this in his work on superstition, says that he could name several ministers who, without scruple, have granted such requests. We see that the priest assists in perpetuating the evils of superstition.

The belief in the healing powers of the water of Lourdes and other places is also encouraged by priests, who derive certain advantages from it. The healing by relics and consecrated amulets, which are supposed to protect from sickness and danger, belongs to the same class ; and

what can we think, when in New York, in 1878, the Rev. McArthur preached from his pulpit that believing Christians were exempt from certain fevers and from sunstroke? And what shall we say when, even in February, 1883, in the churches of St. Aloysius and of St. Joseph, a consecration of throats took place? What is that? our readers will ask. This consecration of throats was to protect the faithful from diphtheria and other diseases of the throat.

It is painful to see that just those whose vocation it is to open men's eyes, and to hold before them the torch of truth, that those who declare themselves to be filled with the holy spirit, do so much mischief and degrade themselves in upholding superstition, partly from their own want of intellect, partly to maintain and fortify their own dangerous and hurtful power.

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Christianity, after an existence of nearly two thousand years, has not been able to shake off this superstition. A creed which has not been able to do this gives the strongest proof of its weakness; and the creed which teaches dogmas which are opposed to reason and to the laws of nature, causes, among other evils, falsehood and hypocrisy; for, unfortunately, there are not many people who have the courage to oppose publicly such opinions as are against their conscience. Such people assume an outward appearance of belief; they observe the rites of the Church, have their children baptized, go to confession and communion, and consider everything merely as ceremonies. They appear to be believers, but, in truth, they have no faith in the doctrines of the Church. They follow the routine from mere habit or out of regard for their friends

or worldly and pecuniary advantages. How many such people are there not in the world?

The influence upon youth of a church which places morality beneath dogmatism is most injurious. Young people are instructed in the dogmas of the Church, but the more enlightened cannot find satisfaction in them, nor can they gain moral strength and refreshment from them.

When the young man or the maiden reaches the age when passions awake in them, they reject the belief in one Supreme God, together with Christian dogmatism, because they think Christianity and religion are one and the same thing; and there they stand for the rest of their lives, without a guide and without a home, just at the time when they are most in need of a firm support.

We often hear from a Christian pulpit, and read in Christian publications, that the respect for the Church and the attendance at church are decreasing. Can we wonder at this in a century when free thought and scientific inquiry have progressed as never before? But it is impossible to bring reflection and inquiry into harmony with a belief in miracles and dogmas.

Let us add to this that the Christian Church teaches its followers that this world is a vale of tears, that our body is a prison and our souls are longing for delivery from it. But our earth, which offers so much that is beautiful, joyful, and blissful, is not a vale of tears, but the home of joy which God has given us to rejoice in and be happy. The entire ritual of the Christian Church, which speaks of nothing but sin, damnation, and redemption, must give a sad tone to all our life, and it oppresses us. True and living religion will make man cheerful and encourage him in a blissful looking up to God.

We hear of orthodox and of liberal Christians, and many church attendants desire to be considered as belonging to the latter class. But this is only self deception. Christianity does not recognize different degrees among its followers, but demands positive belief in all its dogmas without exception ; and only he who blindly believes in all these dogmas, without reserve, without individual opinion, can claim to be called a Christian ; while every one who does not believe so has actually ceased to belong to the Christian Church. Even those sects which do not recognize either one or the other of the dogmas, do not in reality belong to the Christian Church.

The Christian Church advises her followers to take upon themselves the cross of Christ, the real meaning of which cannot easily be discovered. But would it not be better and more according to the intentions of Jesus, if the Church commanded her followers, instead of taking upon themselves the cross of Christ, to take into their hearts Jesus' love for mankind ? That would be a simple, truly blissful, strengthening doctrine. Then Christianity would not look proudly down upon those who believe differently, and would have peace within itself, whilst now it is the abode of eternal dissent, and by its pride and persecution it repulses others.

The symbol of the cross occupies an important place in Christianity. It is seen not only on the outside of churches, but also in the interior, and in private houses, and even, as an ornament, is worn by women. What is the meaning of the cross ? It is to symbolize the crucifixion of Jesus ; but is it not an aberration of human sentiment when it places before the feverish phantasy the blood-stained picture of the martyrdom of a sublime man ?



And can the view of this terrible picture of the agony of death elevate us to prayer? Is such an aspect, and the ideas connected with it, qualified to elevate our mind, to give us blissful buoyancy? And how does this representation of the dying Jesus agree with the words of the Bible: "You shall not make an image of me," as Christianity worships in Jesus the Son of God, God himself? And we should not forget that this same cross has been lifted up as a symbol in all the bloodthirsty persecutions of which Christianity is guilty, in direct contradiction of Jesus' doctrine of love. Christians throw themselves on their knees before the crucifix, and worship an image made by man, and think to do thereby a God-pleasing action. They are not better than the heathens who worship idols, and their worship is the worship of idols.

Christianity has only given other forms to idol-worship. For instance, what else is the "adoration of the monst'rance," which in Spain and other countries is called "the Lord God" or "the Majesty"? And is the worship of the Virgin Mary, "the mother of God," and the adoration of saints aught but idol-worship? And is it not idol-worship when, on Maundy-Thursd'ay, at the consecration of the so-called holy oil, the priest kneels down before the vessel containing this oil, and, worshiping it, sings: "Hail, Blessed Oil"?

The sublime man Jesus is indeed worthy that his image should be seen everywhere, but not in the horrifying scene of martyrdom and execution. If you wish to represent him, you should show him surrounded by children and blessing them, symbolizing his saying, "Let little children come unto me." That would be an image which would represent him worthily, and upon which we could



look every moment with genuine and elevating joy. What shall we finally say about the worship of relics in the Christian Church? The Buddhists preserve a tooth of Buddha and an imprint of his foot; the Mohammedans have the cloak and slippers of their prophet, and the hair of his beard; but the Christian Church has gone much further. There are the milk of the mother of Jesus, the blood of St. January in Naples, and in the Treasury of the Crown of France there are the swaddling-clothes of Jesus, the veil of Mary and the shroud of John. In a church in Brabant there are the cannon-balls which Mary caught in her apron; there are the tears which Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus; there are three different skulls which are supposed to belong to John the Baptist; there are hundreds of swaddling-clothes supposed to be those of Jesus, and as many dresses of his mother; also pieces of wood of the most different kinds coming from the Cross, which would make a cross as high as a house. The skulls of the three wise men of the east are at Milan and also at Cologne; innumerable nails which are said to have been used at the crucifixion, an impression of Jesus' face in a sweat-cloth, thorns of his crown with spots of his blood upon them; and there is a nunnery in France which boasts of possessing a part of the body of Jesus which, in a book intended for women to read, cannot be more precisely described.

All this is Christianity, all this is offered to Christian people as true religion!

## Has Christianity Made Mankind Better?

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If we wish to form a just and impartial opinion on any social or religious institutions, we must inquire, in the first place, after the results which they have achieved. We find an unequivocal reply in two positive sciences,—history and statistics. What we have said about the horrors of the wars carried on in the name of Christianity, about the Inquisition, the trials for witchcraft, fanaticism, and other events, are historical data. Statistics tell us whether crimes have increased or decreased, and we will here give the following data :

In Europe, excluding Turkey, more than ten thousand *murders* are committed annually, not counting the slaughter in warfare, which is also nothing else but murder.

In England the number of murders has increased from 1830 to 1859 at the following ratio: 1830-34, 931; 1835-39, 1054; 1840-44, 1504; 1845-49, 1538; 1850-54, 1597; 1855-59, 1850. The number of murders has increased during these twenty-nine years by nearly one hundred per cent., that of the population by only 40.5 per cent.

In France parricides and poisoning have doubled from 1882 to 1883.

In the eight old provinces of Prussia, *misdemeanors and crimes* increased, from 1871 to 1877, from 88,233 to 145,587. From 1871 to 1875 the population of these provinces increased by 4.68 per cent., whilst the number of misdemeanors and crimes from 1871 to 1876 increased by 51.6 per cent.

In Saxony the increase of population from 1871 to 1875 was 7.4 per cent., whilst the number of crimes and misdemeanors from 1871 to 1877 increased by 70.4 per cent.

In Bavaria the population increased from 1871 to 1875 by only 3.3 per cent., but crimes and misdemeanors, from 1872 to 1877, by 67.5 per cent.

In Wurtemberg the increase of population from 1871 to 1875 was also 3.3 per cent. only; the increase of crimes and misdemeanors from 1872 to 1877 was 83.5 per cent. The population of Hamburg increased from 1871 to 1875 by 14.6 per cent.; the increase of crimes and misdemeanors from 1872 to 1877 was 113 per cent. In France the number of crimes from 1878 to 1880 increased by thirty-eight per cent. In Italy, during the first nine months of 1878, there occurred 2900 cases of murder and attempts at murder, 1900 cases of highway robbery; and in the one month of April, 1881, 141 murders, 110 attempts at murder, 150 highway robberies, 30 attempts at extorting money by violence, and 4812 cases of larceny were registered.

In the United States the number of crimes increased from 1871 to 1878 from 16,000 to 31,000. In Massachusetts offences against morality numbered 583 from 1866 to 1869; in the years 1876 to 1879 they increased to 1537; from 1866 to 1869 the number of illegitimate births amounted to 1624; from 1876 to 1879 they had increased to 2766. The State of Maine, according to the report of Col. Potter, showed the following percentage: The increase of crime from 1851 to 1880, 425 for murders, 400 for homicides, 133 for attempts at murder, 125 for cases of arson, 800 for cases of rape. In the State of New York the criminal classes show an increase of fifty-three

per cent. during the last ten years, whilst the population has increased at the rate of only twenty-three per cent. during the same space of time.

Cases of *suicide* increased in England, from 1857 to 1869, as follows: 1857-58, 1312; 1859-60, 1302; 1861-62, 1304; 1863-64, 1361; 1865-66, 1379; 1867-68, 1451; 1869, 1562.

In Prussia the suicides increased as follows: 1850, 1736; 1860, 2105; 1871, 2723; 1872, 2850; 1873, 2926; 1874, 3075; 1875, 3278; 1876, 3917; 1878, 4689.

In Berlin there occurred, from 1788 to 1797, only 35 cases of suicide. At present the average is 250 a year, 2500 in ten years.

In Saxony the cases of suicide increased as follows: 1850, 390; 1860, 548; 1870, 657; 1878, 1126.

In Bavaria the cases of suicide increased as follows: 1850, 250; 1860, 339; 1870, 450; 1877, 650.

In France the cases of suicide increased as follows: 1826-30, 1739; 1831-35, 2263; 1836-40, 2574; 1841-45, 2951; 1846-50, 3446; 1851-55, 3639; 1856-60, 4002; 1861-65, 4700; 1866-70, 4989; 1871-75, 5256; 1881, 6650; 1883, 7213.

The statistician Morselli gives, in his work on suicide, the following ratio of increase from 1820 to 1876 in the following countries: Prussia, 190 per cent.; Saxony, 190; Bavaria, 187; Wurtemberg, 168; Baden, 244; Mecklenburg, 265; Hanover, 171; German Austria, 530; France, 268; Denmark, 131; England, 118; Belgium, 208; and Italy, 140.

For the whole of Europe the increase was from 20,208 in 1875 to 24,910 in 1878; 110,000 suicides were committed from 1873 to 1878.

We have no reliable data as to the increase of *perjury*; but the following report about cases of perjury which in the following countries occur annually, for 1,000,000 inhabitants, gives also, in this respect, most deplorable results: Saxony, 300; Denmark, 280; Wurtemberg, 180; Mecklenburg, 167; Baden, 156; Prussia, 133; Austria, 122; Bavaria, 103; Sweden, 81; Belgium, 73; Norway, 40. In Gustrow, in Mecklenburg, five persons were tried for perjury in *one* day.

The Secretary of the Interior of the United States, in 1879, revealed a terrible picture as to the frequency of cases of perjury in the United States. "During the last three years the names of five hundred persons were struck off the pension list who had obtained their pension by fraud and deception. The requests of these 500 people were accompanied by statements, upon oath, of 4937 people, an overwhelming majority of whom had committed perjury."

*Prostitution* shows the following increase: In 1845 there were in Berlin 600 registered prostitutes; in 1871, 15,064. In Paris, from 8000 in 1840 to 120,000 in 1870.

*Divorces* do not number among crimes, but as they serve as a means of judging the state of morality, and as the number of cases of divorce is really a very terrifying one, the following facts will not be considered inopportune: One hundred and twenty-six cases were pleaded in Boston in 1882, before *one* judge only; and in May, 1880, 201 cases of divorce came before the Supreme Court in Boston. Altogether 7233 marriages have been dissolved in Massachusetts since 1860. In Connecticut 332 divorces were granted in 1880; 1003 marriages were dissolved in Ohio in 1870, and since then the number has increased

in proportion to the increase of the population 80 per cent. In September, 1882, 74 petitions for dissolution of marriage were sent into *one* court of law in Philadelphia, and 83 in November, 1882. Two hundred and forty marriages were dissolved in the State of Maine from 1878 to 1882.

In his last annual message Governor Bourn, of Rhode Island, mentioned that, in the year 1882, there was one divorce to every 9.7 marriages, and that during the ten years ending on December 31, 1882, 2824 actions for divorce had been brought in the Rhode Island courts. Rev. Dr. Nutting, of Fall River, Mass., lately preached a sermon on the subject of divorce, in the course of which he said: "In 1878 there was one divorce to every nine marriages in Rhode Island, and in Connecticut one divorce to every eight marriages. In the 'Western Reserve' counties of Ohio, where the population element of New England forms a larger percentage than even in the New England States, matters in this respect are still a great deal worse. There are two divorces in that part of Ohio, where there is only one in the other parts of the State, and Lake County, a Yankee settlement, is the worst of all. There one divorce occurs in every six marriages. Wherever parties hailing from the New England States may settle, they soon become notorious by reason of their leading a bad family life, and from the fact that they forcibly curtail the increase of their families. Among the Yankee population the rates of births have decreased in the same manner during the last twenty-five years in which the divorces have increased."

In the County Court of Milwaukee 160 divorce suits were pleaded in 1881. During one law term 120 divorce

cases came before the Supreme Court in Rhode Island. In Vermont there is one divorce to 16 marriages. Since 1860 divorces in Massachusetts have increased at the rate of 147 per cent., while the marriages show an increase of only 4 per cent. In France 2613 divorces were granted from 1863 to 1867; 3277 in the year 1879 alone.

We may mention here that in August, 1882, in Gross-Becskerek, in Hungary, 60 married women had poisoned their husbands; 35 of them have already been condemned; the proceedings against the others have not yet been decided.

*Infanticide* increased four-fold in Paris from 1826 to 1846. According to the report of the coroners of London, the annual number of child murders alone amounts to 12,000. (?) From 1877 to 1881, 1894 dead bodies were found in the Thames.

*Crimes against morality*, rape, etc., have increased at an alarming rate in every country of Europe, and are still increasing.

In the eight old provinces of Prussia the population increased from 1871 to 1875 by 4.68 per cent., the number of recorded crimes and misdemeanors by 51.6, as follows: 1871, 88,233; 1872, 102,077; 1873, 104,878; 1874, 120,900; 1875, 133,734. Here, in the United States, we cannot take a newspaper in our hands without reading reports of murders, suicides and crimes of every kind, and this in a country where there are more Christian churches, and where the priests exercise a greater influence than in any other country. The above numbers give a terrible picture, and describe a state of society which must fill the heart of every righteous man with sadness. Murder, suicides, perjury and crimes of all kinds everywhere, and



increasing from year to year at a terrible rate. The prisons are overcrowded by offenders of every kind, and the madhouses cannot hold the number of those of diseased mind. In Ohio, on May 1, 1883, 1060 madmen were confined in poorhouses and prisons because there was no room for them in the five great asylums of the State. The state of family life is equally distressing. How few really happy families are there to be found, and how many in which the most deplorable conditions prevail! Unfaithfulness, selfishness, heartlessness, strife and contention prevail. Husband and wife live coldly, or even at enmity with each other. Parents neglect their duty towards their children, and children look with indifference and without respect upon their parents.

And such conditions, such increase of crime, such misery, is possible after Christianity has existed for nearly two thousand years. The unprejudiced inquirer must necessarily ask himself how the activity and effectiveness of Christianity can be brought into harmony with such conditions. It is impossible to deny that, judging mankind from its historical development and actual condition, Christianity has done no good. And now a second question comes before our mind. Is Christianity the cause of the present state of things? We should be happy to be able to deny this, but we must admit the contrary. It is not the doctrine of love, of Jesus, which can bring only blessings and happiness, but the establishment of dogmas which are opposed to reason, that is the main cause of this deplorable condition. Men have become accustomed to look at Christianity and religion as identical, and thus it happened that many, when they began to think, and when their reason compelled them to renounce dogmatism, re-

jected with Christianity also religion,—the belief in one Supreme Being, in one God. That is the root of all the evil that exists among Christian nations. Christianity, by its unreasonable dogmas, has driven men from God, and thrust them into the arms of selfishness. The daily and steadily increasing number of suicides furnishes a terrible proof how many men have been driven to despair in consequence of having lost the belief in God.

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Christianity, by representing the person of Jesus as a mediator between God and man, between father and children, has overclouded the relations of men to God, has estranged them from him, and has abolished the adoration and worship of God, and directed it to Jesus and other persons of the Christian dogma. By assuming to be the criterion of the most sublime creed, and as the representative of the highest virtue, and by placing itself above humanity, it has destroyed the latter, and the consequences are all those terrible persecutions and deeds of blood of which we read on every page of the history of the Christian Church.

Christianity demands, above all, a rigid observance of its dogmas, which have been established by men and date from a time when the people were lost in the belief in supernatural things. How would it be to-day with our world, if for the last two thousand years we had obstinately adhered, in other directions, to old traditions? How would it be about the development of the world, about progress in every branch of human knowledge and work? The old is not good and venerable because it is old, but only when it is true and has an honorable past. An old man cannot claim the respect and esteem of his fellow-men

because he is old, but only when, and for the reason that his thoughts and actions have borne good fruit.

Let nobody say that dogma is not the true basis of Christianity, but the moral precepts taught by the Christian Church. That is not so. The essence of Christianity, that which distinguishes it from all other creeds, and upon which the Christian Church lays most weight, is dogma; whilst the principal doctrines preached by the Christian Church can also be found in Judaism, in the ten commandments, in the Koran of Mohammed, in the doctrines of Con-fu-tse and in the Veda.

Christian dogmatism has made its adherents intolerable, proud and cruel, and instead of bringing peace into the world it has brought enmity and hatred. The cause of all the persecutions and bloodshed of which Christianity has been guilty was not the sublime doctrine of Jesus,—“Love ye one another,”—which, on the contrary, was trampled under foot, but dogmatism, the unreasonable teaching of men about Jesus and the misrepresentation of his teachings.

Christianity believes that the righteous and faithful will be rewarded, and that the wicked and the unbelievers will be punished in a future state of existence. The same belief is entertained by the Mohammedans. But what the Mohammedans call the right belief is called heresy by the Christians, and, on the contrary, what the Christians consider to be the true faith is condemned by the Mohammedans. Can both be right? And is this not another proof that the so-called revelations have no inner value? They are the work of men, ripened in the brains of men living in times long gone by, and circulated at a period when science was still in its cradle, and the knowledge of

nature and the universe was such as would be considered a fable to-day. These so-called revelations are children of the past, which have never ripened into manhood, but have remained children to this day. Christianity, in promising rewards to the good and faithful and threatening punishment to the wicked, appeals to one of the basest feelings of the human heart,—selfishness. Man should not do good in hope of reward or in fear of punishment, but because it is his duty. Good and evil find their reward here on earth, and our earthly happiness does not depend on a blind belief in obsolete dogmas, but upon righteous thoughts and kind actions.

Christianity is overflowing with intolerance, but delights in assuming to itself the glory of toleration. But what is this so-called toleration? Is it the offspring of humility which does not raise itself above others? No, on the contrary, it is the offspring of disgusting pride, of overbearing conduct towards all who believe differently. One can only be tolerant towards those whom he believes he has the right not to tolerate. But this is a right which no one can assume towards another. It is, indeed, a humiliating fact that in this nineteenth century there are people who believe that they do an act of righteousness if they tolerate those who hold different religious opinions from theirs. The orthodox Christian thinks he has done his duty towards other creeds if he tolerates them. The non-Christian, the simple-minded man, who believes in God only and tries to do his duty towards his fellow-creatures by brotherly love, rejects the pride of toleration and recognizes the equal right of all men as his most sacred duty.

Wherever Christianity has prevailed, instead of freeing the human conscience it has enslaved it, instead of the

God of love and peace it has brought the demon of war and enmity. Christianity and its pietism have darkened the minds of men and have robbed them of their cheerfulness of heart and their joyful looking up to God.

That Christianity is incapable of uniting men, to soften their minds and to bring about a blissful condition of humanity, is proved by the history of all centuries in which it has reigned. No other creed (this is an historical fact) has caused such inhuman horrors, has caused more terrible strife of man against man, has brought so much misery and wretchedness into the world as Christianity.

It is said that the cloak of Christian charity covers everything, and, indeed, it has covered all the bloodshed, all the fanaticism which has cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, all despotism which keeps mankind in fetters to this day. Not so Humanity, which carries no cloak to cover unrighteous actions, but which stands before you naked and pure and calls to you, "Do what is right, be brethren, act like brethren!"

Christianity teaches not to love God, but to fear him; but there is no fear in love, for love casteth out fear. (First Epistle of John iv. 18.)

Christianity attempts to drive out all earthly joys from the hearts of its followers; it asks them to renounce every earthly pleasure, and the majority of Christian priests are, in appearance at least, opposed to everything that does not belong to the Church or to the service of the Church. This is the reason why they wish to devote the Sunday entirely to the Church, not to use it also as a day of recreation and pleasure; this is also the reason why they wish to enforce temperance, prohibition and the limitation of

personal liberty, which attempt can produce only hypocrites. There is no expression of Jesus which can be brought into harmony with such efforts. We can only pity those who think they are rendering a service to God by spending the Sunday in gloomy meditation and brooding, and who refrain from every useful work and recreation because they think Sunday work and Sunday pleasure a sin; and thus they lose the beautiful, sunny Sunday, which is not intended to be spent in devotional exercises only, but should also serve as a recreation after the labors of the week, and to give us fresh courage and fresh strength for future work. Not so with the non-Christian, the believer in God. Whilst the orthodox Christian looks upon this earth as a vale of tears, and expects his reward for present privations in a future world, the true believer in God, who also looks forward to a future world, but in the light of a superior spiritual life, enjoys this earth as a paradise which God has blessed with a thousand pleasures for his enjoyment. If one wishes to educate men for heaven only, and represents to them the things of this world as without value, the use of their intellect is superfluous, if they only believe blindly and leave everything to the guidance of the Church. We may be sure that no angels can be made out of such beings, who will finally be ruled only by their sensual inclinations and passions, for the sensuality within them cannot be killed.

Christianity has created among men an evil passion which was not known before its existence,—namely, denominational hatred and denominational pride. All other passions will gradually be calmed, but denominational hatred becomes more violent and more intense the older it grows and the longer it exercises its influence upon

mankind. The recent brutal persecutions of the Jews in Germany and Hungary are a living testimony of this.

The history of Christianity teaches many things; it shows to what monstrous excesses blind fanaticism can lead. We see a world of wild passion, persecution and inconceivable cruelty, of terrible torments and suffering, and a continuous strife against all that is humane. It has cast its curse upon families and upon races, upon countries and nations of high and noble culture, and all for the sake of dogmas and spiritual supremacy.

It frequently happens among Christians that they curse each other in wild passion, and the Catholic Church even to-day flings her anathema against all who believe differently. Fathers and mothers are not afraid to curse their children, without once asking themselves the serious question whether the depravity of their child is not their own fault. The non-Christian, the believer in God's fatherly love, will never commit such an act; and if parents are unfortunate enough to have a child who has gone astray, they will not curse it, but, on the contrary, they will pray that God's all-merciful love will shed its blessings upon it, and that it may become better.

And has Christianity a power that unites and pacifies, or one that separates and divides? That it does not possess the former is proved by the hundreds of different sects into which it is divided, each of which looks with evil eyes upon the other, and each of which thinks its own creed the only right one. What has become of that much-praised Christian love?

The statistics of the increase and spread of mental maladies among Christian people speak in eloquent figures. In the United States, in 1860, there was one imbecile in



1310 inhabitants; in 1875, one among 953; and whilst the population from 1870 to 1880 has increased by 26 per cent., the number of insane has increased by more than 60 per cent. From 1870 to 1880 the number of insane had increased from 37,432 to 91,997, while the increase of the population amounted to about 30 per cent. In Massachusetts, the number of insane people has increased during fifty-nine years from 50 to 2976. In the Department of the Seine, in France, the number of the insane is six times more than it was thirty years ago, whilst the population has scarcely been trebled. In England, Scotland and Ireland the number of insane was, in 1862, 55,525; in 1872, 77,013; and in 1882, 98,871. In Prussia, the number of insane, in 1871, amounted to 55,043, while in 1880 it had risen to 66,345. The number of the insane had increased in these nine years by 20.5 per cent., whilst the population had increased by 10.6 only. In England, in 1859, one insane person was found among 535 inhabitants; in 1875, one among 365. The first census of the insane in Italy was taken in 1874. Three years later their number had increased by 17.42 per cent. Everywhere we see a terrible increase of the diseases of the mind. Radenhausen says, in his work on Christianity: "Not one of the principal creeds of the world has created so much mental disturbance as Christianity; and if to-day, as the Christian priesthood complains, religious sentiment is on the decrease, we find in every madhouse a great number of persons who have lost their reason by brooding over the inexplicable doctrines of Christianity. The dogmas of hereditary sin and of the sinfulness of all men have furnished a goodly number; also the sins against the Holy Ghost, the transubstantiation, the

divinity of Jesus, the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, wonderful appearances in a state of trance or in dreams, miracles, the fear of hell and the hope of heaven, the last Judgment Day, the coming end of the world—all these have contributed to fill the asylums. These aberrations of the mind, which are incurable, as they were derived from and based upon church belief, in many cases caused crimes which appeared justifiable. There have been mad people at all times, and they now exist among all nations and all creeds, even in increasing proportion the higher the state of national culture, and the more changeable and intricate their social conditions in the various degrees of prosperity. But the division of madness caused by brooding over church problems is most emphatically recognized among Christian nations, without showing a decrease in other divisions."

But when we see the human mind filled with such incomprehensible doctrines as Christianity teaches, can it be a matter of surprise that many who brood over these things lose their reason and become inmates of mad-houses? We hear much of Christian civilization, but civilization and culture are not the results of Christianity, but the arduously conquered fruit of the free human spirit, which has gradually disengaged itself from the fetters of the Church. Civilization is not in need of Christianity to fulfill its humane mission, but Christianity is in want of civilization to rid itself of the barbarism, fanaticism, persecution, war, belief in wonders and miracles, which still adhere to it. Horrors, as happened only two centuries ago, such as those committed by the Inquisition, are no longer possible to-day, simply because liberty of thought has made its way and humanity and brotherly love have

driven Christianity and Churchianity into the background. Civilization is the contrary of barbarism, and has nothing to do with Christian miracles and dogmas. The teachings of Jesus, the doctrine of one God and brotherly love, have a civilizing mission; not so the dogmas upon which Christianity is based.

It is a task of civilization to realize the idea of the conscientiousness of equal right, and the suppression of barbarism which tramples upon the rights of man. Civilization proceeds from the union of men, in their spiritual as well as in their material life. In the mutual wants which this union produces is the germ of civilization, and it is the sum of the satisfied physical and intellectual wants of human society.

In all fields of human thought the Christian creed, in its foundation and activity, is simply Christian. All sciences, such as natural philosophy, medicine, jurisprudence, mathematics, history, geography and political economy, as well as all arts, trades and commerce, are not Christian, for they are carried on not by Christians only, but by the followers of other creeds. Civilization is not the offspring of Christian faith, but the natural consequence of the age and of the gradual development of nations and mankind in general, as is the case with the development of single individuals. As the unconscious child gradually develops into the thinking and active man, so mankind has developed in the course of centuries and tens of centuries.

Civilization and culture are of incalculable age, much older than Christianity. A very high state of civilization existed among the Indians, Persians, Egyptians, Greeks and Romans long before Christianity was known. Their

countries contain imperishable monuments of a great epoch of culture,—monuments which to this day stand before us as emblems of former greatness. The Greek Homer is to this day the greatest of all poets, and the Greek and Roman poets and prose writers remain brilliant models for the present generation. The Greeks taught mathematics, philosophy, astronomy and other sciences to the Persians and Arabs. Who can number the intellectual heroes which Greece can count among her artists and writers? In sculpture, Skopas, Phidias, Praxiteles; in painting, Apelles; in poetry, besides Homer and Pindar, the dramatists Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and the cheerful Aristophanes; the orators Isocrates, Lysias, Demosthenes; the historians Herodotus, Xenophon, Thucydides, and the philosophers Socrates, Plato and Aristotle,—all men the equals of whom no other nation has produced.

Rome also has shown magnificent work in the domain of mind and intellect—authors like Cicero, Horace, Virgil, Ovid, Terence, Livius and Tacitus, who have written for all times, and their glory is imperishable. The articles found at the excavation of Herculaneum and Pompeii are speaking witnesses of the high state of Roman art. Egypt is the country where we find the earliest traces of civilization. Architecture and sculpture flourished there four thousand years before the birth of Jesus. No nation on earth so early attained such a high state of civilization. More than six hundred years before Jesus the Phœnicians are said to have attained a high position in culture.

The Chinese have done extraordinary things in literature, and their efforts in industry and art are equally

remarkable. The oldest newspaper in the world is the *Pekin Gazette*, which has existed over a thousand years. No nation possesses an encyclopædia like the great Chinese work consisting of five thousand and twenty volumes, a copy of which can be found in the British Museum in London. The Chinese printed books from wooden tablets as early as one hundred and seventy-five years before Jesus was born. Towards the end of the sixth century they printed with wooden stereotypes; and towards the end of the tenth century printed books came into general use. The proficiency of the Chinese in the manufacture of silk and china needs no comment.

All these nations have disclaimed Christianity. If we desire further proof that civilization does not depend on Christianity, let us look in our own times to Japan, where, within a few years, a civilization has been developed, without the aid of Christianity, which entitles the inhabitants to a place among the civilized nations of the world. Since 1867 a great number of public schools have been opened, which ten years afterwards were attended by over two million pupils, who were instructed by over sixty thousand teachers. The government spent for purposes of public education \$5,000,000 per annum, and during this period more than \$8,000,000 worth of land was contributed from private sources for that purpose. No more eloquent testimony for civilization could be found.

Sir David Wedderburn lately drew a picture of society in Japan, removed from so-called civilized influences, which was altogether delightful. He depicted the people of the interior as remarkably polite and considerate in their behavior, as gentle, kind, industrious and honest. He even went so far as to say that Europeans who had

lived among them for years, when they returned to "civilized" life, were disgusted with the rudeness of the manners of their countrymen as compared with the refinement of the Japanese.

He who asks himself honestly why he believes in the dogmas of the Christian faith, and gives himself an honest answer, must feel convinced that he believes in them because they have been taught him from his earliest youth, and he has never asked himself whether they are based upon reason and truth. The example of all those non-Christian nations, advanced to a high state of civilization, must lead him to the conviction that miraculous dogmas are not necessary to make nations happy and great. And now, dear reader, I beg of you to examine carefully once more everything that has been said in the preceding pages, and then, from the depth of your heart, to answer the question on the title-page of this work: "*Is there not a faith more sublime and blissful than Christianity?*"

## RELIGION.

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YES, dear reader, there is something higher, more sublime, more blissful than Christianity, namely, the pure belief in one Supreme Being. That is the only true religion. The plain, unsophisticated belief in God is higher and more elevating for the reason that it is not based upon dogmas invented by men, but has its origin in our innermost feeling, and speaks directly to our heart; because it is not based upon miracles and inconceivable enigmas, but is in harmony with our reason and can be understood by everybody. It is not in need of supernatural revelation, but relies only upon that which throughout the universe lies open before our eyes. This faith speaks every moment to our conscience; it is our friend, adviser, and comforter in all changes of life. It recalls to us every moment the great truth that we are all children of one eternal God, that all men are brethren, and that the sublime commandment "Love ye one another" is the highest of all, including all that is good, righteous, and virtuous.

We always hear of different religions,—the Christian, the Jewish, the Mohammedan, and so forth,—but, indeed, there is only *one religion*—that is, the belief in *one Supreme Being*. This belief we find to be the foundation of all systems of religion and all phases of belief, but it is so hidden and distorted by dogmas and secondary matter



that the main principle cannot be recognized, cannot even be found in all this confusion.

If we speak of the *different so-called religions*, it is again the question of that one *natural religion* as opposed to the *revealed religions*; and the churches which represent the latter look haughtily upon the natural religion, the only true one, because it believes in one Supreme Being only, and excludes all dogmas and miracles.

What is the meaning of the word "positive"? Positive is that which is established by visible evidence, in opposition to that which is the result of thought. Religion of Positivism is one which has been established by church tradition, and which does not rely upon thought and individual innermost conviction.\*

Therefore, the denomination positive, for religious directions of that kind, although right in itself, is not correct as an antithesis of natural religion. The so-called positive religion is an artificial edifice, and if it may be called a religion, whilst it is nothing but a phase of belief, should be denominated as an artificial and supernatural one in comparison with natural religion.

Any religious creed which is interwoven with miracles and superstition prevents free action, worries and torments man's heart. On the contrary, true religion—the firm belief in one Supreme Being, and in the fatherly love of God—does not oppress and trouble us, but makes us free from passions, and endows us with moderation and dignity

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\* I am speaking here of the Positivism (the dogmatism) of the Church, which must be distinguished from the Positivism of Auguste Comte, the French philosopher, who lived in the first half of the eighteenth century, and formulated a faith as part of his positive philosophy.

which at all times will lead us towards the good, and will give us inner satisfaction.

The history of Christianity teaches us that the so-called positive religions have caused unspeakable mischief and misery. They have taken away the feeling of human brotherhood; they have taught men to consider each other as opponents and enemies; they have taught them to elevate themselves above those who believe differently; they have compelled their followers to commit the greatest crimes. Intolerance, persecution, religious hatred and fanaticism have been the constant followers of so-called positive religions.

The division of mankind into different religious communities and sects has destroyed true religion in the heart of mankind and caused much mischief. How often do we not see that regular church-goers have committed crimes,\* which proves that religion and church-going, though frequently connected with each other, are two very different things! It would be impossible that men who attend the same church, are present at the same service, and are united with their fellow-creatures in the same common prayer, could engage their minds upon the execution of some crime if religion had always been considered what it really is, if they had been taught that true religion does not consist in dogmas and outer ceremonies, but in doing right and in following the divine law of morality.

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\* In the State prison in Trenton thirteen people belonging to the educated classes have served terms of hard labor during the last eight years for fraud and other crimes, most of whom were regular attendants at church.

Religion and belief in the Church are two very different things. The former unites, the latter separates mankind. Those who believe in one God possess true religion, whether Christian or Jew, Catholic or Protestant, all men, of whatever faith, nation or race. What are the characteristics and the principles of this universal religion, this religion of the heart, which Jesus taught? Religion is nothing but the belief in one Eternal God, the Creator and Ruler of the World,—the consciousness which proceeds from it, that all men are the children of God, and consequently brethren, and the submission of our will to that of the Supreme Being. The essence of all religion is complete and exhausted in the one principle: Thou shalt love God and thy neighbor as thyself. *That* is religion, that, and *that alone*, is the essence of the doctrine of Jesus. Religion and simple belief in God are identical. Religion is the sanctification of the moral law through faith in God, virtue and immortality. It is the appreciation of all that is good, beautiful and true; it is the burning sacrifice on the altar of our hearts; it is the living desire after the eternal and the infinite; it is the harmony of all the powers that dwell within us with the demands of reason and morality; it is the only security that the inheritance of man is a sublime destiny, and that his spirit is immortal.

Religion is a want of the human soul; it is the loveliest flower of human nature, and develops itself among all nations, the most primitive, as well as the most civilized, according to their capability of understanding. The craving for a religion is as old as mankind. As far as we can follow the history of man, from his earliest beginning, from the earliest tradition or myth down to our times, we

never find him without religious thought, without the feeling of submission to a higher or highest spiritual being. With primitive nations this feeling expresses itself often in strange form, but it is always there. There is no nation on the face of the earth without some germ of religious feeling, and that proves that religion—the belief in a higher or highest being—is a common demand of human nature, which only needs to be developed and to be guarded against the blast of dogmatism to bear the precious fruit of peace and love.

There are two powers which struggle within men's hearts for supremacy,—submission to the will of God and egotism. When the latter vanquishes, it brings forth wrong; when the first conquers, the result is righteousness.

Religion is the belief in one Supreme Being, which is revealed at all times in the destinies of individuals or of all mankind, in the wonders of nature, in inconceivably sublime works, which to this day are as glorious as they were in times immemorial. It is revealed in history, in the progress of civilization, in the arts, and in the brilliant results achieved by science.

Religion is unselfish, self-sacrificing devotion to the will of God; it is the inner life of the human soul in and with God; it is feeling, spirit, mind. Religion is man's own particular sanctuary, for no other creature has or can have religion. As far as we have been able to fathom nature in its innumerable phases, there is no evidence of any other being capable of any sensibility, of consciousness, of action, which, even in the most distant manner, can be connected with religion. Nowhere in the animal world can be found a trace of religion, or any indication pointing to such a

sentiment. Religion is the privilege of man, which he enjoys above all creatures.

Religion is nothing external, nothing political, nothing social. It is something purely spiritual: dwelling in the innermost part of the heart and soul, it shows itself only in the actions of man. Only in his actions is shown the true standard of a man's religion.

Religion is intended to ennoble the human spirit and heart, to enlighten man about his destiny here below, to direct his path.

Religion is the source of universal brotherly love, a love that is without bounds, which excludes nobody, no matter how humble his position may be in the social scale. This love is manifested by charity and benevolence, which is not refused to our enemies. It induces us to take a keen interest in the woe and weal of all men; and it never wearies.

Religion is a plant deeply rooted in the hearts of men, and, if carefully nursed in our youth, is developed in after years into a vigorous tree, bearing precious fruit.

Religion is the common property of all men, no matter of what race or nation; it is the bond of love which unites all mankind and reconciles all differences. Therefore, it should not be distorted by sectarian views. All barriers which separate man from man, everything which smothers even one of the germs which God has planted in our hearts that they may grow and flourish, should be condemned.

Religion is the treasure, the faithful guardian and benefactor of family life. A family in which religious life has become extinct can never be truly happy, for in such a union husband and wife cannot live in true love together,

nor can the children show their parents loving obedience and duty.

Religion is the glory of human life, and must be the living principle of all our deeds and works, of government, science and art.

Religion sanctifies every place. The low-roofed hut becomes as sacred as the ancient cathedral with its lofty spires. It sanctifies all honest labor and work,—that of the plowman and the sower, which are as holy as a prayer or a chant. The sound of the woodman's axe in the forest, the ring of the blacksmith's hammer as it falls on the anvil, are as sacred as the sound of the organ. Religion sanctifies all who are good and who do right.

Religion does not appoint certain days to be observed as holy. It does not command, as the Church, that what is right and permissible on one day is wrong and unlawful on another. All days are holy, the working-day as well as the Sunday. Sunday is not a day of gloomy reflection, of weariness and laziness, but to be devoted to edification and to recreation.

Religion is the most important and sacred of all man's possessions, and as necessary to his existence and progress as sunshine is to the seed of the fields. It cannot be supposed that a man, arrived at the full maturity of his intellect, can model his opinions after the catechism which is given to a child. Man has a right to think for himself, and he cannot under any circumstances be deprived of this right. He who is conscious of this privilege and of his duty towards God and his family, must not adopt nor proclaim religious doctrines which are not in harmony with his convictions. No man must be forced to embrace any religious beliefs. No priest, no preacher,

no pope, nor king, but man's reason is his only authority in spiritual matters.

Man is absolutely in need of religion, of the belief in one Supreme Being. No philosophy can take its place. Religion alone, by its commandment of love, places him in the proper relation to his brethren. It is the foundation of all morality, it brings us joy in the fulfillment of our life's vocation, it gives us comfort and strength in the hours of sorrow and grief, and it assures us of the immortality of our spirit.

Religion cannot be replaced by science, whatever value we may place upon the latter. Religious culture must go hand in hand with science. All knowledge, no matter how high and advanced, is only of value if we live truly religiously and morally.

Religion gives man strength to withstand firmly all the storms of life ; never to waver, but to strive unceasingly, and work until victory is gained.

Religion leads to a virtuous life, and is the strongest safeguard and protector against low sensuality.

Religion is that power which, by invisible bonds, unites mankind with that which is eternal and invisible. Religion alone can annihilate all the evil which positivism has created.

Religion is the principal means by which we are educated to our ideal view of life, and therefore indispensable. All that is ideal, all devotion of the heart to the ideal, is embodied in religion. It is the constant monitor before man's eyes that there is something loftier than eating and drinking and the satisfying of sensual wants, that this world of the senses is only an outer appearance of that which is higher, eternal and ideal.



Religion is not the belief in a power which at random suspends the laws of nature, but a belief in that power which appears before us in these laws.

Religion is not a disturber of joy, but a dispenser of it. It will not sadden our lives, but make them joyful and happy; at the same time it teaches us to partake of the pleasures of life wisely and in moderation.

Religion shows man his own dignity,—to see in his own spirit the image of God, to be a child of God. It gives him the consciousness and the holy desire to manifest the spirit of God in all his thoughts, words and deeds, not for the sake of men's favor or worldly gain, but only for the sake of the dignity of man.

Religion is that which is best and noblest within man, and to have reached this comforting and happy goal is well worth an heroic struggle.

Religion speaks to man as the voice of eternal truth, as a power of God, which elevates him above all earthly doings.

Religion is the heart-pulsation of moral life, a constantly renewing longing after the sublime, and therefore the innermost desire of the human race.

Religion is a power which demands man's co-operation, and which manifests itself in a two-fold way,—in our relation to God and in our relation to our fellow-creatures. The true character and the true power of religion are shown in our submission to God and in love to our fellow-men.

Religion is the foundation of the highest and most sublime possessions of mankind. Whoever fights for this prize may be sure that victory will be the final reward.

Religion is something that has no equal. All that we prize in this world is transitory and can be replaced; not so religion; it is eternal.

Man needs religion in every circumstance of his life; in the most ordinary and in the most elevated. It is the want of the uneducated and demand of the most cultivated. It is folly to think that the most enlightened in the higher, educated classes can do without religion. The richer his wealth of thought, the more extensive and developed his circumstances may be, man is all the more in need of religion, because he has to conquer more temptations than those in a different condition. The more elevated the position of a man, the more he is in want of broad, leading ideas which will direct his mind in the complication of matters, which will give his life a firm hold in the pressure of business and bring peace to his heart.

Religion brings comfort and reconciliation. When man has gone astray and has fallen low, it calls to him in gentle accents: "Rise, and return to me; with me thou wilt find forgiveness and peace." Truly, that is more comforting than the dark apparition of the Church which has built its throne on the stake, and thunders at him: "Down with thee, thou sinner, down in the dust, or thou art lost for ever!"

Religion, because it does not allow selfishness to grow up, teaches and assists us to view the world and everything around us in the right light, and to occupy at all times a right position towards our fellow-men.

Religion is that field upon which all men can and ought to live united in bonds of love. Nothing has separated mankind more, for centuries past, than the difference of creeds.

Religion in its purity is the soul of life, a blessed power and a shining sun. But when it is shrouded by dogmas which separate men, it becomes a fiery and devouring flame.

Religion is the oldest, most venerable, and most indispensable of all institutions. It is universal, because the need of a God is innate in human nature.

Religion is liberty. In religion is freedom from ecclesiastical and political oppression, as well as the power to fight against it; for religion will ask only that which is right. Men of religion will not allow themselves to be oppressed by either priest or king; they will not be the tool of autocracy.

The reason why so many people show want of religion, or indifference to it, is not to be found in the fact that religion, the belief in one Supreme Being, is against their nature, but because they confuse religion with dogmatism; and because the Church demands that they should believe in and confess to a doctrine against which their reason rebels, and which cannot satisfy them. Do not ask men to fetter their intellect. They will always cling to the pure belief in God; and this belief will make them purer, better, more virtuous and more ready to receive the sublime doctrine of love for all men which Jesus has taught. The longing after the Sublime and Eternal is deeply rooted in the heart of man. Thousands and thousands who never go to church would gladly come. The churches would not be able to hold those who would come to listen and to pray, if they were not repulsed by dogmas which do not satisfy the heart, instead of being attracted by Jesus' doctrine of love. What blessings would this change produce! How it would contribute to make men happy! Many an unhappy marriage would be blessed

with peace. The bond between parents and children, which in these days is so often loosened, would again be fastened. Strife and quarrels would be extinguished in the germ or peaceably settled, immorality would decrease, many crimes would be prevented; hatred, bloodshed, misery and wretchedness would grow less in this world. Oh! a heavy responsibility rests upon those who prevent this change. But the Christian priests know nothing besides the inflexible dogma, and they can imagine piety only within the limits of their sectarian doctrines. They forget, or wish to ignore, that thousands of years before Jesus there have lived many pious and highminded men, and that at all times, as to-day, there have been among the believers of all religious communities, outside of the Christian Church, exemplary and truly pious men.

What is piety? True piety consists in reverence of the Supreme Being—not in words, forms, and ceremonies, not in church-going, prayers, and Bible-reading, not in outward devotion and phantasm. It means that our thoughts and actions are always such that we feel no reproach of conscience, and that we never shun to make public what we think or do, or hide it from our fellow-men.

True piety is purity of thought and will, sacrifice of our own self for the sake of that which is true, good and reasonable, the infusion into our life of divine qualities. True piety is cheerful, and true cheerfulness is pious. That cheerfulness in which man forsakes his dignity and does something of which he has reason to be ashamed, is a flower that exhales perfume, but contains the poisonous worm. And a piety which prevents us from looking cheerful in the world and in the sight of our fellow-men, is not true piety.

Goethe describes piety in these words: "In our inmost heart there lives a desire to surrender ourselves freely and gratefully to some higher, purer, and unknown Being, to unfold ourselves to Him who is eternally nameless. We call this being pious."

There is a false piety. It is characterized by laying great stress upon outer forms, as, for instance, regular attendance at church, and strict observance of the commands and usages prescribed by the Church. It considers Sunday only as a day of worship, not one of recreation from the work of the past week. It condemns on this day every recreation, every social joy, every enjoyment of nature. It passes a heartless judgment upon all those who are of a different opinion, and who consider that God has given us Sunday not only as a day of prayer, but also as a day for recreation, and for enjoyment of the pleasures of this life. How many of those who go to church not only on Sundays, but several times during the week, like the Pharisee in the Gospel say: "I thank Thee that I am not as other men," and are evildoers and godless; whilst many who never enter a church are pious in their heart and would avoid doing the slightest wrong!

Among these false pious are those who visit only fashionable churches, that exclusive church aristocracy which likes to reserve for its own use its own richly-decorated and well-served churches and keep back its poorer brethren.

In repulsive contrast to piety are the hypocrites, who want to deceive God and the world by assuming the mask of piety. This pharisaism is not an outgrowth of piety, as is often supposed; on the contrary, it is directly opposed to it, a hideous distortion of that holy feeling which

unites God and man. Hypocrisy is the intentional representation of good appearance to deceive others about our inner being and desire. Love, friendship, piety, can be falsely assumed. The wickedness of hypocrisy, particularly of that which takes religion for a cloak, does not need to be proved. Hypocrisy is the most hideous, the most contemptible, the most demoralizing of all crimes, because it defies scornfully the eternal God; it uses the apparent belief in Him as a cloak to cover wickedness and depravity; it corrupts man to the very bottom of his heart,—his whole being becomes a falsehood, a continual lie. A professed criminal will sooner be converted than a hypocrite. If the latter is unmasked, he generally becomes so hardened that moral shame no longer affects him. The hypocrite using religion as a cloak is as bad as the robber or the murderer, if not worse. The robber steals only worldly property, and the murderer takes our mortal life, but the hypocrite steals and kills the confidence of man in man. People of that class should be avoided like the pest. Hypocrisy is particularly an outgrowth of Christianity. When a Jew is orthodox, it arises from honest conviction. If he is not orthodox, and is what is called a form-Jew, he will not assume to appear orthodox. Religious hypocrisy is seldom found among Jews.

There is another direct contrast to piety,—namely, the denial of God, the feeling of those who have entirely abandoned the belief in God, who ignore him, the ungodly, the godless. The thinking being of pure heart can find no difficulty in his choice between piety and godlessness. Whoever meets this question is placed at the junction of two roads, one leading to contentment and happiness, the other to misery. There is no way between,

and whoever tries to find one through the briers and thorns, and the morasses of indifference and weakness, will find that it leads to no good end.

The word piety is often misunderstood and misused. We read in newspapers of men who are church-goers and have committed evil deeds, as a "pious thief," a "pious cheat," a "pious sinner," a "pious debauchee." But a thief, a cheat, a debauchee, or anybody who commits a bad action, can absolutely not be pious; for piety and wickedness are absolute contradictions. Such an abuse of the word pious can only lead to degrade religion and piety in the eyes of those who are not able to judge for themselves; and that is certainly not the intention of those who make use of these unsuitable terms. People speak of pictures which represent incidents of biblical or sacred history as "sacred pictures." How can a picture be sacred? Sanctity is an attribute of the soul and has nothing to do with colors or a paint-brush. We can speak of a pious painter or of a man who is of pious mind, but it is an anomaly to give to his creations, no matter how sublime they may be, the denomination "sacred."

The words Christianity and religion are frequently used in the wrong sense when speaking of one or the other. Christianity, Judaism, Mohammedanism, etc., cannot be called religion, because they are blurred and defaced by secondary matters. They are not religion proper, but merely creeds in which the belief in God forms the primary foundation.

The word *religious* is also often used in a wrong way. We speak of "religious intolerance," "religious hatred," "religious enmity," when we should really speak of intolerance, hatred and enmity which have their origin in



ecclesiastic and sectarian differences. One also speaks erroneously of "change of religion," of "religious errors," of "religious ceremonies," "religious communities," when one should speak of change of creed—the change from one church to another—ecclesiastic errors, ecclesiastic ceremonies and communities. "Religious wars," of which we read in history, have never existed, for religion is peace, and does not make war. Those wars which are called "religious wars" in history, were wars of the Church, caused by ecclesiastic persecution. We hear of "religious madness," but religion has never yet deprived a man of his reason. It can only soothe every excitement and give peace to the mind. Those unfortunate ones who have been pointed out as possessed of "religious madness" have not lost their minds through religion, but through gloomily brooding over dogmas which they could not understand, through Bible-reading and dogmas which confused their mind. Religion can hurt nobody, can deprive no one of his reason. On the contrary, it is a friendly power, which, as long as it exists in the heart of man, will soothe the grief and pain of the suffering heart.

There is another word which, in reference to religious matters, is often misused, misunderstood, and leads to erroneous opinions,—namely, the word *free*. We read of "freethinkers," and so forth; but we are left in doubt whether freedom *in and through* religion, or freedom *from* religion—in other words, atheism—is meant. Those who adopt this principle should be honest enough to write openly and honestly their war-cry on their flag, instead of seducing others, who do not think clearly, to their opinion, by raising the golden standard of liberty. They deprive mankind of that support and comfort which religion brings

in the storms and vicissitudes of life. There would be less suicides if the belief in God's fatherly love were not violently torn out of men's hearts.

Many people are of opinion that we can do without religion, that the code of morals and ethics contains everything that is necessary to lead a righteous and happy life. But that is an error. Religion teaches us our duty towards God, towards ourselves and towards our fellow-men. Morality only teaches our obligations towards ourselves and our fellow-creatures. Morality alone cannot replace religion; it endows us with ethical principles of action, but it leaves the heart cold, and cannot satisfy us throughout the length of an average lifetime; it grants no safeguard and protection when heavy storms shake the foundation of our being. Man needs religion in its fullness of power and beauty to give him peace of mind, to conquer the selfishness which is innate in every human heart.

Religion and morality stand to each other as theory to practice. Religion is the initiative of the good; morality is merely the execution. They are in the same relation as abstract to applied mathematics. Religion gives us the principles of and instruction to do that which is good; morality teaches us how to carry it into execution.

Fr. Vischer, the well-known religio-philosophical critic, defines and distinguishes religion and morals as follows: "Morality says, '*Thou shalt.*' Religion says, '*I alone give thee power to do what morality commands, for I alone conquer selfishness.*' And it adds: '*I alone comfort thee, when thou hast honestly willed, and yet hast become guilty.*'"

Religion is that childlike communion between God and man, and not only the sanctification of morality, but

the absolutely necessary condition of it. Religion and morality as matters of principle and conscience must not be separated from each other; they must not be valued and judged apart from each other.

Morality has been gradually developed from religion; and, according to the principles of an established order of society, religion, as teacher and guardian of morality, occupies the first place. Morals and ethics are only a consequence of religion. Whoever mistakes them for religion itself will see in time that he has been mistaken. Morals alone are wanting in those elements which are indispensable to a contented and happy life.

Instruction to fulfill our religious and moral duties is fully contained in the Ten Commandments, which are given in chap. xx. of the Second Book of Moses, so completely that whosoever follows these commandments will have nothing to repent of at the end of his life. But the contents of these commandments are neither Jewish nor Christian, but purely human, as is shown by a comparison with the commandments of faith and morality outside of the Christian and Jewish world. We give here a few instances:

When the creed of the old Indians, who worshiped God under the name of Brahma, began to decay, there arose a great reformer named Gautama, born six hundred and twenty-two years before Jesus. He saw the corruption, and went in search of the wise men of India, in order to discover how to bring about the salvation of man. He appeared as a teacher in the year 588 before Jesus, and worked for many years; and the people and the king followed him. His commandments were these: Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not be

unchaste ; thou shalt not lie, nor swear, nor speak profane words ; thou shalt not be revengeful, nor covetous, nor superstitious. He taught that religion is love, and that men should love each other. He taught honesty, obedience of children to their parents, good-will towards children and friends, generosity, tolerance, charity, and suppression of all passions. He taught that love should be returned for hatred and ill-will, that evil should be conquered by goodness, and lies by truth. Buddhism, the doctrine of Gautama, which is six hundred years older than Christianity, first preached the gospel that all men are brethren and should love each other. Like Christianity, it later passed beyond the limits which divide nations, and carried its blessings into the most distant countries, not, like Christianity, by persecution and arms, but by the power of the convincing word. Buddhism did not persecute the followers of the old Hindoo creed, from which it proceeded, as Christianity persecuted its spiritual parent, Judaism. Gautama died five hundred and forty-three years before Jesus, and was called after his death Buddha, which means the Holy One. To this day Buddhism, beyond all creeds, comprises the greatest number of followers.\*

Mohammed taught : There is one God, who rules the world. He must be truly worshiped by men through virtue. Virtue consists in submission to the divine will, in devout prayer, in charity towards the poor and to strangers ; in honesty, chastity, sobriety and purity,

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\* According to the latest estimates there are 740,000,000 followers of Brahma and Buddha ; 394,961,000 Christians ; 172,965,000 Mohammedans ; 7,000,000 Jews, and 116,510,000 followers of less developed or heathen creeds.

respect of our parents, patience, continence, sincerity and love of truth and peace ; whilst falsehood, revengefulness, hypocrisy, avarice, scorn, pride, and extravagance are held up as vices.

The Chinese philosopher Con-fu-tse, who was born five hundred and fifty-one years before Jesus, taught : Human nature came to us from heaven, pure and perfect ; but, in the course of time, ignorance, passion and evil examples have corrupted it. It is the all-important task to raise it again to its pristine beauty ; and if we wish to be perfect, we must again elevate ourselves to that height from which we have fallen. Obey heaven and follow the commandments of Him who rules it. Love thy neighbor as thyself. Let thy reason, not thy senses, guide thy conduct ; for reason will teach thee to think carefully, to speak sensibly, and to show thyself dignified on all occasions. What thou wouldst not like to be done to thee, do not do to others. Thou needest no other law ; it is the foundation and the foremost of all.

Zoroaster, the founder of the creed of the Parsees, was born six hundred years before Jesus. We find his views expressed in the holy book of the Parsees, the Zend-Avesta. The Parsees believe in one invisible God, and venerate his visible symbol, fire, not worship it, as is sometimes supposed. The essence of Zoroaster's doctrine is contained in the words : Think purely, speak purely, and act purely.

In the so-called golden rules of Pythagoras we read : Do no evil, neither in public nor in secret, and, above all, take heed of thyself,—that is to say, fulfill the duty which thou owest to thyself, to thy honor and to thy conscience ; let no consideration lead thee away from these

principles. Every man should speak and act so honorably that nobody has cause to doubt his simple "yes" or "no." Only he who is not a slave to his passions is a free man. If thou wilt take vengeance upon thine enemy, do good unto him and make him thy friend.

Socrates, four hundred and sixty-nine years before Jesus, taught: If anybody has offended thee, do not offend him again, but return good for evil.

Thales, four hundred and sixty-four years before Jesus, taught: Do not do anything which thou blamest in others. Do good unto thy enemies; be kind to thy friends, that they may remain thy friends, and to thy enemies, that they may become thy friends. Avoid being offended; but if thou canst not, do not avenge offences. Be friendly and kind to everybody, speak no evil of anybody, not even of thy enemies.

Aristotle, three hundred and eighty years before Jesus, said: We should do unto our fellow-men as we would that they should do unto us.

Hillel, fifty years before Jesus, impressed upon his disciples the same rule: Do unto others as thou wouldst they should do unto thee.

Isocrates, three hundred and thirty-eight years before Jesus, said: Act towards others as thou wouldst they should act towards thee.

Solon, six hundred and forty years before Jesus, taught: Strive after excellence. Those are happy who act honestly and live moderately. Honor thy parents and cherish thy friends.

Publius Syrus taught: Forgive the wrong which others do to thee, but never that which thou doest. Through kindness thou canst accomplish what is impossible to accom-



plish by force. It is better to forgive an offense than to avenge it. It is a royal deed to return good for evil.

We see that the prescriptions of the above-named creeds and the sayings of the heathen sages of antiquity contain the ideas of the most sublime code of morals, and that religion and morality are not Christian or Jewish, but purely human. *In all lies the germ of the religion of all mankind.*

Tyndall says : " The facts of religious feeling are to me as certain as the facts of physics. But the world, I hold, will have to distinguish between the feeling and its forms, and to vary the latter in accordance with the intellectual condition of the age. The world will have religion of some kind. You who have escaped from these religions into the high and dry light of intellect may deride them, but in doing so you deride accidents of form merely, and fail to touch the immovable basis of the religious sentiment in the nature of man."

A modern author, Spielhagen, wrote lately : " All who worship God in spirit and in truth constitute the great community, the members of which are counted over all the earth, in all countries, in all zones, in the palace as in the hut ; and the future belongs to them. Their God does not dwell in temples made by men ; they are their own temple, and their thought is prayer. They do not observe holy days, because all days are holy to them, and they will have no priests, because they are all priests. They do not believe in hell, because blissfulness begins for them already on earth. They do not fear death, because they deny the existence of death ; they do not name the name of God, because he is nameless and unspeakable."



A time will come when all men will understand each other, as in the days before God divided the tongues, and all men will again be brethren.

This time will come when true piety has torn off the mask from brooding Puritanism and selfish atheism, which now contend for supremacy,—when the love of God and of our fellow-men, the only aim and end of religion, is placed on the altar of all mankind.

Therefore, ye men, cease to be Christians, Jews and so forth. Become men, humanly-thinking men,—not only creatures with human bodies and faces, but with hearts as Jesus would have them ; men who believe in one Supreme Being, who recognize each other as brethren, and think and act humanely. *Humanity and its needs stand far above all creeds.*

## GOD AND THE WORLD.

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GOD and the World—Creator and Creation—are two ideas which are so closely connected that they cannot be considered separately. God cannot be perceived by our bodily senses, but can be divined and conceived by our inner soul only. We can contemplate and take cognizance of the universe with our senses; but in order not only to imagine and feel God, but to recognize Him in all his greatness and sublimity, we must look at his creation, the universe.

The Bible certainly gives us a history of creation. It relates that God created the world in six days, and then rested from his labors, like a tired man, on the seventh. But this blasphemous history of creation, which might have sufficed when mankind was in its cradle, is not in accordance with our matured modern view of the world. Mankind has made wonderful progress, and science, which has embraced the entire universe, from the smallest microscopic animal up to the world of stars, has made us better acquainted with the world, and has proved that everything which has taken place in the world, and which is still taking place every day, is based on unchangeable laws. Wherever laws exist in such perfection and sublimity, as is the case throughout nature, there must be a law-giver, a supreme intelligence, a spirit above time and space, who has made these laws and executes them.

A few years ago a Hollander, Iten Doornkaat-Koolman, published a pamphlet called "The Infinity of the World" (Norden J. Soltan, 1866), which is perhaps the best that has been written upon this subject; and as, probably, no other pen will succeed in describing so clearly, so intelligently, so graphically, I let him speak for himself: "If we wish to recognize God in his works, and present to ourselves distinctly the consciousness of his almighty, all-perceiving, all-supporting power, we must take into our consideration the world of creations in its entirety,—all nature in its minutest details, as well as in its largest proportions. Then only we become convinced that it is unlimited in both directions, that our senses, even when artificially assisted, are nowhere sufficient to discover the limits of the world, the landmarks of creation. In order not to lose ourselves, in order to prepare gradually our powers of conception for the astonishing results to which our observation will lead us, we must begin with the smallest, with the earth and what is living upon it. From thence we will ascend into the heavens, examine the sun and its system, and finally direct our view to the innumerable world of stars, as far as science permits us to take it within our measurement.

"It is a fact recognized by science as irrefutable that every living body, every organic formation, consists of numerous most minute particles called atoms. Although this is an undoubted truth, no human eye has ever seen these atoms; single, they have never been perceived by our senses, because their indescribable minuteness cannot be weighed by our most delicate scales, nor be seen through our most powerful microscopes. And they are still separated from the smallest forms of organic life by

an immeasurable abyss. The smallest *infusoria* that can be recognized with the microscope are so immeasurably minute that we are not able to form an opinion of their size, as a single small drop of water contains hundreds of millions of them. But if we consider that even these smallest *animalculæ* are not wanting in limbs to move, are armed with means for catching their prey, and for their support possess organs for eating and digesting, how inconceivably fine must be the particles which compose their bodies ! And, again, we must remember that these organs do not consist of one inseparable piece, but are constructed, like every other organic body, of various cells, which consist of a combination of primordial matter in which is revealed the divine law of life and the power of God.

“ If we take the microscope, we see unfolded before our eyes a wondrously rich world of life, where before nothing existed that could be recognized. The water which we drink, the air which we breathe, are filled with organisms which can only be perceived by the help of powerful magnifying glasses. In the dust of the desert, in the water, in the weeds and slime of the sea, we find everywhere an innumerable number of the smallest organizations, many of which, in spite of their minute size, are constantly at work in changing, in a noticeable manner, the formation of the earth, and force us to recognize that even the meanest creature should not be despised ; for, in God’s hands, it becomes a powerful means to further his ends. But what the microscope now shows us, where, with its help, such a wonderful and infinitely rich life is now revealed to us,—all these things in former times were a sealed book, and many generations had to pass by before,

by the invention and continual improvement of this instrument, we succeeded in entering into the world of minutest life. Among the smallest of all living creatures is the *monas crepusculum*, for which one drop of water is already a world of mighty dimensions, as millions of them find room for movement in it. There is another species of *monads* of a similar size, which we frequently observe in food turning into a state of putrefaction. They appear in little red spots, which, on account of their likeness to blood, led in former times to the most absurd suppositions, and provided rich food for superstition. The celebrated Ehrenberg has examined them in recent times with a microscope, and discovered that these red spots were nothing but a multitude of the smallest *animalculæ*, forty-six thousand *milliards* of which would not fill a thimble.

“In comparison with these, the species of *Vibrio* are mighty giants. Their world is the skin which is formed over vinegar. And yet these microscopic giants,—what are they? Invisible beings which have never been observed by the naked eye. Their length is about the one hundred and fiftieth part of a line,\* and we may swallow millions of them without even imagining their existence; only the larger infusoria of a drop of water, the dainty rotifers and dragonets, exist on the limits of the world which can be perceived by the naked eye.

“If we continue our wanderings through the world, in comparative observation, passing from the smallest to the larger world, we find the different species of insects spread over the whole earth in infinitely rich variety and everywhere in great number. Many of them can only be dis-

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\* A line being the twelfth of an inch.

tinguished by the aid of the microscope, whilst others belong to the class of larger animals visible to the naked eye. Looking at it more closely, we find this world of insects a wonderful construction, and of the greatest importance for the household of nature. They have a deep and very powerful influence upon the fate of individuals, as well as upon that of nations; and history has told a great deal of their destructive power. This world of insects is instructive and interesting for man, as it shows us in what a wonderful manner nature knows how to help herself, and how to restore equilibrium to her disturbed balance.

“In field and forest, in the depth of the sea, we find innumerable hosts of other creatures infinitely rich in variety of formation,—from the smallest animal, apparently belonging to the vegetable world, up to the ape with his likeness to man, a constantly increasing perfection and higher organization. Frequently superior in size and strength to man, he rules them only with that intellect which God has given him, knowing always how to overcome their rude strength by appropriate means. The most gigantic representatives of the animal world are the ostrich, the elephant and the whale, the latter of which reaches a length of one hundred and twenty feet. But if we consider their size in comparison to the mightiest representatives of the vegetable kingdom, then even these large animals appear only to be dwarfs; and as indeed the formations of the vegetable kingdom surpass in richness and charming beauty the creations of the animal world, they are also superior in size and majestic construction.

“Pointing straight towards heaven, the trees of the primeval forests of America, thousands of years old, raise their heads to a height of four hundred feet, and the net-

work of their strong roots is very deep within the soil. We are seized with admiration and astonishment, and also with veneration, when, wandering beneath them, the storm howls through the leaves of their mighty branches. But what becomes again of these giant trees? How insignificant their size, when we compare them with the mountains on the face of the earth! Pushed forth from subterranean depths by secretly working powers, they rise beyond the clouds of heaven, where their heads, covered with eternal snow, are surrounded by a shining halo, which irresistibly leads our view to the world of stars.

“If man raises his eyes to the clouds of heaven, their height appears to him very great and beyond his reach. But if he ascends only a moderately high mountain, he finds that the thunder rolls at his feet, and he stands above the cloud which sends the lightning to the earth. But what is this height compared with the giants of the Andes and the Himalayas? From their height of nearly thirty thousand feet the ordinary mountains look like small hills. And yet these mighty mountain giants,—what are they compared to the whole earth? Nothing more than grains of sand upon a ball. Their existence cannot even be recognized, during a lunar eclipse, in the shadow of the earth. Thus, the Great in comparison with the Greater appears small, and the most minute microscopic animals become giants when compared with the different molecules and atoms of organic bodies. Then we look up to the atmosphere of the world, and what do we find there? Certainly something substantial, because it produces waves of light, and is enabled to retard the course of the comets. If the single molecules and atoms of organic bodies are of such immeasurable minuteness that they are forever



withheld from our observation, how minutely divided is the ether!—so indescribably fine that to our observation it appears an absolute Nothing; and yet, in its actual influence, in the part which the Creator has assigned to it, it is of the greatest importance. Penetrating every space of the universe as the conveyer of light, it forms the bridge of knowledge of the worlds beyond us, so that only by this means we recognize the dazzling light of the sun, and the gently beaming light of the moon and the stars.

“We form frequently a very erroneous idea of the size of the heavenly body which is our habitation,—the earth. If we consider it, not by itself, but in comparison with the sun and the stars of heaven, how infinitely small it is! to what a tiny little dot it shrinks after we have looked at it a little closer!

“In calculating the elevation of mountains we are able to use the foot-measure, but we must take another standard if we wish to measure the earth,—a standard which is better suited to its size.\* We use for this purpose the geographical mile of twenty-four thousand feet in length. If we measure the earth with this, we find that, with a diameter of nearly eighteen hundred miles, it has a circumference of nearly fifty-four hundred, and a surface of nine million two hundred and eighty thousand square miles. We know almost nothing of the interior of the earth and what is hidden there. Our entire knowledge is limited to a very scanty layer of its outer crust,

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\* Throughout this chapter the German geographical mile has been used as a measure. The German geographical mile (fifteen to one degree) is four times the length of the English geographical mile (sixty to one degree). Of the ordinary English statute mile there are sixty-nine and a fraction to a degree.

and the greatest depth which man has reached does not amount to five English miles, and thus of the lower regions of the earth we really have no knowledge.

“If we look from our earth towards the heavens, it would seem as if the whole atmosphere moves daily from east to west around our earth. This apparent movement is only the consequence of the motion of the earth itself. The earth turns on its own axis, of which the two poles are the resting-points, once in twenty-four hours. It is clear that in this manner the revolutions near the equator attain a greater velocity than the same revolutions nearer the poles. At a distance of one degree from the poles the velocity amounts to only ninety-four miles in twenty-four hours, whilst near the equator every part of the earth makes a daily voyage of fifty-four hundred miles—viz., three and three-quarter miles in a minute. People living in these parts fly with the velocity of a cannon-shot, but they cannot notice this movement, as not only every point of the earth, but the entire surrounding atmosphere, makes the same movement with them, and thus all direct means for observing this velocity are wanting.

“Besides this rotation on its own axis, which produces the change of day and night, the earth is subject to another movement which produces the change of seasons—namely, its annual revolution around the sun. On this voyage the earth must make four and one-seventh miles in a second, as the length of this journey is one hundred and thirty-one millions of miles. The diameter of this circuit measures about forty-one millions of miles, from which we know that the earth must be distant from the sun about twenty and one-half millions of miles. Light is a swift messenger. It flies through this immense space

in eight and one-third minutes, which makes about forty-two thousand miles in a second. Pouring forth from the sun, it puts the atmosphere into undulating motion without removing from their place the atoms which are constantly swinging to and fro. That there is something inconceivable and mysterious in these waves of light cannot be denied. According to the different rays of the sunlight, it has been calculated that not less than from four hundred and fifty to six hundred billion movements take place in one second.

“As children of earth, also depending on the sun, we will now pay a visit to this our Queen, and, on this occasion, look a little closer at her. Before we put our foot on the surface of the sun we have to penetrate a sea of light, before the dazzling splendor of which we must close our eyes. This sea is the immense cloak of light of the sun which surrounds the more solid body, and which is called the photosphere of the sun. Into its depth of thirty thousand miles we could drown the earth and all planets, without excepting Jupiter, which is one thousand four hundred and seventy-four times larger than our earth, even without discovering a trace of them. It is easily understood that this photosphere must exercise an immense pressure upon the surface below it. The atmosphere of the earth, which is only ten miles high, presses with the weight of two thousand one hundred and seventy-eight pounds upon the square foot. From the fact that the atmosphere of the earth produces light under a certain pressure, we can explain the existence of the light of the sun. It is possible that the sun is a body enveloped in a burning sea, the flames of which are nourished by the gases which proceed from it, thus producing solar light.

After we have arrived safely, and without being blinded by the sea of light, upon the firm surface of the sun, we are struck at once by its immensity. In order to proceed more quickly we make use of electricity in our voyage, which travels at the rate of sixty-one thousand miles per second. As ten seconds suffice to return by this express-train to our point of departure, we find that the circumference of the sun amounts to quite six hundred thousand miles. Its diameter is one hundred and ninety-three thousand miles, and its contents so mighty that it would require about one million and a half of our earths to represent its size. In order to give even a more comprehensible idea of its magnitude, and in order to make it perfectly perceptible, we would mention the following facts. Everybody knows the moon, which, as a satellite of this earth, revolves around it in twenty-eight days, at a distance of fifty thousand miles. If we suppose the earth to be situated in the centre of the sun, and the sun a hollow body, the moon could revolve around the earth within the circle of the sun and yet remain as far distant from the extreme circumference of the sun as it is from the earth. All the bodies of the planetary system would find more than room in the interior of the sun; for, counted all together, they would not amount to the seven-hundredth part of its body. That this immeasurable body must exercise a great influence upon the surrounding heavenly bodies will be easily understood. By means of its power of attraction the sun rules within its domain with an iron rod. None of its subjects can refuse obedience, for its power extends to the extremest distance. The limits of its empire which have been measured amount to at least seventeen billion six hundred million

miles. In the year 1680 a large comet appeared. The celebrated astronomer Encke calculated its course, and found that its period amounted to eight thousand eight hundred years, and at its aphelion it proved to be seventeen billion six hundred million miles distant from the sun. Its power of attraction forces its influence, even at this immense distance, upon the bodies travelling through the heavenly space, and it does not permit its subjects to move according to their own will, or leave their prescribed path.

“As regards the larger planets, several of them surpass our earth in size. Uranus is eighty-three times larger, and Jupiter, the largest of all, one thousand four hundred and seventy-four times larger than the earth. Their distances from the sun, as well as the period of their revolution, are very different. Mercury, which is nearest, makes a revolution of eight million miles in eighty-eight days, whilst Neptune, the most distant, six hundred and twenty-two million miles, requires two hundred and seventeen years to accomplish its revolution.

“The smaller planets, called asteroids and planetoids, are small bodies invisible to the naked eye. The largest of them, such as Pallas, Ceres and Juno, have been known for many years. Their number is annually increased by new discoveries. As they are of secondary importance for us, we will leave them and pass to the moons, of which our own is the most important. Even with the naked eye we discover on its surface all kinds of configurations of unequal light. But if we look at our moon through a telescope, we recognize distinctly that its surface is very irregular, and in every direction cut up by deep valleys and chains of mountains. We also see basins of different

• dimensions, surrounded by circular walls, which, not very appropriately, have been compared to the craters of our volcanoes. To what cause they owe their existence is unknown. We know another circumstance relating to the moon—namely, that it has no water and is not surrounded by an atmosphere like our earth's. Animals and plants which require air and water for their existence cannot live there, and any possible inhabitants of the moon must possess an organization entirely different from ours.

“The sun, like the earth and the planets, rotates on its own axis. The time of this rotation amounts to twenty-five days and seven hours. Besides this rotation the sun has another continuous movement in the space of the universe. This is calculated to amount to eight hundred and thirty-four thousand miles within twenty-four hours; and, according to an approximate estimate, the sun would require eighteen million two hundred thousand of our years to accomplish one revolution.

“As its subjects, the planets, etc., cannot leave it, we also must accompany the sun in its rapid voyage through the immeasurable distances of the universe. Thus we know of three distinct movements of the earth—first, the rotation of the earth on its own axis; secondly, its revolution around the sun; thirdly, the general movement of the earth and the whole planetary system, with the sun, around a common center. But what is this common center? Is it an infinitely large, dark, central body, or the general point of gravitation of the entire system of the Milky Way?

“Indefatigable in their desire for knowledge and to measure every phenomenon of the universe, astronomers have made efforts to ascertain the probable size of the



fixed stars. The results so far accomplished are of such immense distances that everything we have hitherto said about the size of the sun and the heavenly bodies disappears. It is said that the star Vega, in Lyra, has a diameter of one billion four hundred million miles. If Vega were hollow, and the sun were placed in its center, all planets, even Neptune, with its distance of six hundred and twenty million miles from the sun, could freely travel around it without touching the extreme circumference of the star. The magnitude ascribed to the *Polar* star is supposed to be much greater, and here every point of comparison is wanting.

“From the immense magnitude of the fixed stars, we may conclude a corresponding distance. In order to find a measurement for this, we have no figures within our comprehension; we must leave the distance of *terrestrial* miles, and form *celestial* miles by means of the light which in one year can travel over the space of one and one-third billions of miles. A year of this period of light shall be our standard—a celestial mile. And what is the result in calculating the first and nearest fixed star? *A Centauri*, near the South Pole, and, therefore, invisible to us, is distant not less than three and two-third years of light-time. The second nearest is *No. 61* in Cygnus (the constellation of *Cygnus* is found in the bifurcation of the Milky Way, where its principal star, *Denet*, shines), the light of which requires eleven years of light-time to reach us. The third is *Sirius* (in Canis Major), the brightest of all fixed stars. It sends its rays from a distance of eleven years of light-time to our earth, and the *Polar* star requires fifty-seven of such years before its light finds its way to us. The beams which guide the mariner on his



course on dark nights, and lead him as a friend and comforter on the desert of the ocean, have left the *Polar* star fifty-seven years before they reach the eye of the navigator. Now we arrive at that invisible world of stars of which the Milky Way forms the extreme limits. According to Maedler the sun is six hundred and eighty light-years distant from the center of the Milky Way, *Alcyone*. It is four thousand years distant from its extreme limits, so that the whole diameter of this constellation of the system of the Milky Way amounts to about nine thousand years of light-time, or nine thousand times  $1,333,333,333\frac{1}{3}$  miles, which is an utterly incomprehensible distance for us.

“If we look at night towards the starry firmament, we imagine that we see an innumerable host of beaming stars. Such is not the case; for in both hemispheres we cannot see with the naked eye more than from five thousand to six thousand. But if we use a powerful telescope, the whitish veil of the Milky Way becomes divided into single stars. Herschel thinks he is justified in estimating the complete number of the Milky Way system at eighteen millions at least. Other astronomers estimate it from at least two hundred millions to three hundred millions. And, should these be the only inhabitants of the universe? We can say No, with confidence, although the world, if it consisted only of this system, would be large enough, and preach loudly enough the greatness of the Creator. If, on a bright night, we examine the heavens attentively, we discover in many places, on a dark ground, a whitish light like a delicate mist. If we look at them through the great telescopes of Herschel and Rosse, many of these *nebulæ* dissolve into single stars. Astronomers justly

consider that they recognize in them compact groups of stars similar to those of our Milky Way. Thousands of these have been discovered, which, in the most incomprehensible distances, enliven the space of the universe. The distance which separates us from these most remote groups of stars is so great that it would require at least eighty million years before the light of these stars could reach us.

“Every space of the universe is filled with innumerable beings and worlds; and we see how they are governed by the supremest laws of reason, in a constant state of changing movements, in continual birth and annihilation. When we consider all these formations of matter, all these laws which govern the world, the thing which first most strikingly and inevitably impresses our understanding, the thought which is overwhelmingly revealed to our veiled eyes at every step, is the idea of an omnipresent Supreme Intelligence, the lofty exercise of an infinite and eternal Reason, which is beyond mortal understanding to seize and comprehend in the true grandeur and reality of its being. It cannot be denied that this Supreme Intelligence, this Supreme Reason, must proceed only from a spiritual being, and can live only within a spirit.

“It is an undisputed fact that everything made by the hand of man—the most insignificant utensil—is the product of a preceding intellectual activity, and must first be invented and formed in the human mind before it can be worked and finished from the matter of which it consists. If this is a fact, if this cannot be refuted, must it not be the same with the wonderful works of creation, with the innumerable beings and worlds of the universe, which exist in such incomprehensible perfection and eternal harmony in the endless space of the universe? Would it

not require also a preceding intellectual activity? Are they not also the result of spiritual creation? Have they not also been conceived and been present, clearly and distinctly, before the spiritual eye of a Supreme Intelligence before they were revealed in animated matter? Whoever has looked most deeply into the work of nature, whoever has profoundly perceived the working of this Supreme Intelligence, whoever has formed an idea of his own littleness, of his limited knowledge, of his dependence upon something superior, must answer all these questions in the affirmative; for as in the working of nature an intellectual activity is everywhere revealed, it is necessary that there must be a possessor of this intelligence, there must be a spiritual being, who stands above matter, who rules over it and embodies his ideas in it, and allows them to assume form."

So far we have quoted Doornkaat-Koolman. Are there any further proofs required of the existence of God? Scarcely. And yet they exist. There are men who say, "What proof have we that there is a God? We cannot *see* God." The answer to these doubters would be: "Can you see your own *soul*? Or do you believe, because you cannot *see* it, that you have *no* soul? Or do you believe, on account of some observations invisible to the bodily eye, that you have a soul? And have you not the same indication in proof of the existence of God?"

Another proof of the existence of God, which every man carries within himself, is the voice of conscience. If thy conscience warns thee or accuses thee, canst thou command it to be silent? Look back upon thy whole life and thou wilt find an answer to this question. This

answer will irrefutably solve the question whether there is a God, a higher spiritual being above us, or not.

And does not all human and spiritual operation emphasize the fact that wherever something is created there must be a creator? How have all the masterpieces of poets, composers and painters come into existence? Certainly not by themselves. There were spiritual powers which by means of language created glorious poetry, by means of tones those mellifluous melodies which rejoice our ear and our heart. There were spiritual powers which, with brush and color, produced on canvas those pictorial representations which, even after centuries, arouse our admiration. Such human creations, however, can no more be compared to the creation of the world, than weak human power can be compared to the almightiness of God; but, nevertheless, they are a proof that nothing can come into existence by itself, and that every created thing must necessarily and under all circumstances have a spiritual author.

How many truths there are which we can apprehend with our human senses, the causes of which we cannot comprehend! Who is able to understand how electricity in one moment carries a message hundreds of miles? We cannot deny the fact, and know that it is the electric spark which produces these results. But how is it possible for electricity to perform this work? Of that we know nothing. We know the delicate perfume of the rose, the glorious songs of the lark and the nightingale, the gorgeous colors of many birds and butterflies; we know that the Guinea-fowl has spots and the zebra stripes, because we can apprehend these things with our senses. But what is the cause of the perfume of the rose, of the enchanting

songs of the lark and the nightingale, of the glowing colors of the butterflies and the birds? What is the reason that the Guinea-fowl has spots and the zebra stripes? Of these things we know nothing. We must be satisfied with the conclusion that all these things have been decreed by a creative intelligence.

No thinking man will dispute that there is much in this world which we recognize as fact without being able to fathom the causes of it; and if the blind man does not see the rising of the sun, and the deaf man does not hear the rolling of the thunder, yet the sun rises every day and the thunder continues to roll. One might think that those who have been born deaf and dumb could have no idea of the existence of God, yet such is not the case. Experienced teachers of these unfortunate people have ascertained by observation that persons who are deaf and dumb, without instruction carry within themselves the consciousness of a God, and of the difference between *life* and *soul*,—another proof that the idea of a superior or a Supreme Being is firmly rooted in human nature.

Positive proofs are not always required to show a truth. Circumstantial evidence is sometimes sufficient to establish it. When an impartial and unprejudiced judge is forced, by the weight of conflicting testimony, to assume the existence of an object by the absence of proofs as to the non-existence of the same object, he is compelled to believe in its existence, for then it is *clearly made evident* that the object exists. If we demand more, we would degrade history to a fable and obliterate historical certainty.

Beyond all doubt, our earth has experienced many revolutions, heavenly bodies have perished, stars have disap-

peared, and new ones have appeared which had not existed before. This proves irrefutably that everything in the universe, as regards form and outward appearance, is perishable and subject to continual change. We can perceive this fact with our senses, but the cause of it we can neither comprehend nor reduce to laws of which we have knowledge. But everything that happens gives us a proof that an eternal, creative, powerful force, a sublime spirit, is at work throughout the universe in little and also in great things.

We mortals probably will never have a clear comprehension as to the manner in which the world was created. Let us leave this to natural science. Man must be satisfied with knowing that God is his creator and the creator of all beings. Everything in the advanced state of modern science leads us to this belief. Even if the limits which scientists have placed upon our knowledge of nature, even if everything which exists could be produced by mechanical movements, from the time when moving atoms, a primitive cosmic matter or nebula alone existed (to which final germs science has reduced the primary cause),—even then the questions would remain to be answered: *Whence* comes this primary matter? *Whence* the movement of atoms? *Whence* the powers of attraction and repulsion? Everywhere the book of science must conclude with such interrogatories, because, in its utmost limits, creation has put an end to all experiments and conclusions. There, at those extreme limits, where the conviction with overwhelming power is forced upon us that all our knowledge is piecework, *there* we must bend our knee in reverence and adoration before Him who has been from eternity and will be forever.



God lives and reigns. His rule extends over all the earth and throughout the universe. Every age points to his 'sceptre. At his command generations rise and fall, nations appear and perish. He has elevated and humiliated individuals, families, tribes, and peoples. His eye includes all destinies. He rules, and he rules in such a manner that when sorrowful moments come, when we might ask, Why? Why? his fatherly love will appear and mingle in all that concerns us.

There is a wide abyss between the God of the Jewish people, as he appears in the Old Testament, and the God whom Jesus revealed to us. The God of the Old Testament is a Being possessed of all human defects and passions, wrathful, cruel, and full of vengeance; only the protector of the Jewish people, who alone find grace before him, whilst all other nations are a horror in his eyes and worthy of destruction. He gives command for the ruthless murder of men, women, and children. Like a human autocrat, he changes his laws according to his pleasure. He has no respect for law and right. According to the Old Testament, he placed before the first pair the seductive tree of knowledge of good and evil, threw the serpent, the symbol of seduction, in their way, and, after the first pair had eaten of the fruit of the tree, he drove them out of Paradise because they succumbed to temptation which he himself had prepared, by planting in their heart the desire to break the law. He is, or was, a God who created men, and afterward repented that he had created them; a God who sent down a flood which destroyed nearly every living thing, and then again repented; a God who accepted the sacrifice of innocent beasts for the expiation of sins, which they could not have committed, but which had been



committed by their master, man; a God who commanded the burning of animals as a sacrifice of gratitude and joy for benefits which he had bestowed upon mankind.

That is the God of the Old Testament. How different is that God which Jesus has revealed to us! He is not a dreaded ruler of a single nation, but the loving father of all mankind, of every nation or creed; he is not the condemning judge, who visits the sins of the father upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, but the forgiving father, whose sun rises over the good and the wicked, and who lets his rain descend upon the just and the unjust. Who could resist loving this God, who embraces all men with his love? Who would not strive to please him?

The phrase "a personal God" is of old tradition, yet it cannot be justified, for the word "personality" includes limit, which is not in God and never can be in him. The idea of a person or personality, according to the usual meaning of the words, applies only to man, a bodily, limited, earthly being, who is capable of thinking, willing, and acting. The idea of a God is a purely spiritual one, and his qualities are as far above those of mankind as the most distant star is from this earth. His infinite plenitude of goodness, knowledge, power, and wisdom is stretched like a blessing hand over all the earth, protecting, guarding, and sustaining all.

Christianity teaches us to fear God, and the fear of God is considered as a necessary attribute of a good Christian. But man should not and must not fear God any more than a child should fear its parents. There is no fear in love, but "perfect love casteth out fear." Our feeling towards God must not be fear, but reverence, and the desire

which proceeds from it to prove ourselves worthy of it by our deeds and thoughts.

The more man recognizes in God not only the Creator and Preserver, but the loving Father, and the closer he clings to him, the more he will come to a knowledge of his own dignity and moral obligation. Fear will disappear, and love take its place; and in this love to God live the union of all ideas, the reconciliation of all contradictions, the highest consciousness of God.

Among all teachers of mankind who have ever lived, Jesus was the first whose great soul found the most sublime, the most comprehensive, and the most blissful expression for God,—“Our Father.”

The most perfect confidence goes hand in hand with this perfect, reverential love. But we should not hope that God, in our need, will help us with a miracle. However great may be the load that oppresses us, we should not sit down idly, but use our intellect and do what our reason commands us; then our confidence in God will not deceive us. God's constant guidance of our destiny is an education full of wisdom, which we all need, even if the elements of this education sometimes necessitate trial and suffering. All joy which is bestowed upon us, and all labor, want, grief, and pain which we have to carry, come from his fatherly hand, and are for the best; and we must accept all that God sends us with gratitude and quiet resignation, with hopeful and unquenchable confidence. We must never forget for a moment that all things are for the best to those who love God; and that everything depends upon God's blessing. The belief in God and in his fatherly love is that center in which all mankind meet, as the whole earthly family meets in the house of the father.

In his innermost soul man needs an object of sublime reverence. He feels that a higher power watches over him, an invisible power which is infinitely superior to him, a power which he dreads to displease, to which he can turn for comfort and help in times of misery and sorrow, and to which he is responsible for his actions. This presentiment, this belief, goes through all stages of the development of our religious consciousness. In the germ it shows itself, even to-day, among uncultivated and savage nations in rude form. But it gradually develops in the same manner as Christianity in its doctrine of the Trinity. And it is only one step toward the belief in *one* Supreme Being, toward the purely spiritual belief in God.

Max Muller, the well-known Orientalist, in a recent lecture spoke of the ancient Aryans as follows: "The old Aryans felt from the beginning the presence of something supreme, infinite, and divine, or whatever we may call it to-day; they tried to seize it and to understand it by giving it name after name. They thought they found it in the mountains, in the streams, in the clouds, in the heaven and in the father of heaven. But no name would satisfy them. What they looked for was not in the mountains, not in the dawn of day, not in the clouds: it was not a father. It was something of all these, but more; even the name 'Deity' could not satisfy them. 'There may be deities,' they said, 'but we seek a more sublime word, a purer thought.' They desired no deities, not because the idea was too high for them, but because they wanted something higher. What lived in the Aryans was the striving after the Supreme, and their cry of despair was the harbinger of a new conception of God and the world."

In the Vedas of India we find the following: "There is a living and true God, eternal, without form and parts, and without passion, almighty, all-wise and all-good, the preserver and creator of all things. He is all-knowing, but nobody knows him; he is called the great, wise spirit; he is the God who penetrates, all-powerful, through space; he lives in the light and in everything that is. The Lord of Creation was before the universe. He lives in **all** beings and rejoices in his creation, and dispenses retribution justly throughout all times."

The same sublime idea of God can be found in many of the sacred poems which are sung by the people in India; and many works which treat entirely of the idea of a God can be found in their hands. Here follow a few passages from them:

"Do not inquire after the being of the Eternal, nor after the laws according to which he rules. Be satisfied that thou daily beholdest his wisdom, power and goodness in his works. Thou, O God! art the true, eternally blissful light of all time and space. Thou wast before **all**. Praise and adoration be to thee. The Supremest Being is invisible: nobody has ever seen him, time has not comprehended him. His being penetrates everything, and all things proceed from him. All power, all wisdom, all knowledge, all sanctity, and all truth are in him; he is of infinite goodness, justice, and mercy; he has created all things, preserves everything, and likes to dwell among mankind, to lead them to eternal happiness. I serve the Lord who has created the world, in **whom** it exists, to **whom** it will once return, and in **whose** splendors it shines,—the Lord whose glory is **eternal** and unspeakable, and to whom holy men

elevate themselves when they have scattered the darkness of error."

In Mohammed's Koran we find the following: "God is the only and eternal God. He does not beget, nor is he begotten. No being is like unto him. There is no other God than he who lives from eternity. He does not sleep, neither does he slumber. To him belong heaven and earth, and all that is in heaven and upon the earth. All that is in heaven and upon earth praise God. He is the mighty, the wise, the seen and the unseen, the first and the last. He knows everything. He is the light upon thy path. Praised be God, the gracious and merciful, the Eternal Judge. We worship thee; from thee we implore help. Guide us in the right way, that we may not go astray."

Among the commandments of Zoroaster we find the following: "Good works and not blind belief assure you the entrance into the higher life. According to your actions you will be judged; if you lead a pious and virtuous life, your reward will be in heaven; and when you have sinned, repent and amend, and the Eternal Judge will be merciful and forgive you."

In "Shuking," the principal work among the writings of Con-fu-tse, it is said of God: "He penetrates through everything, hears and understands everything. How great and sublime is he, how just and how wise! The beauty of heaven proclaims his greatness, the inexhaustible fertility of the earth shows us his benevolent care; teach the people to praise him and to thank him for his benefits."

Socrates writes: "God sees and knows everything. He who carries this in his heart will do no wrong, neither in

secret nor in public, for he knows that nothing can remain unknown to God."

Aristotle says: "There is a supreme intelligence which is the fountain of all that is good and true. It is eternal; it is a Supreme Being, purely spiritual and invisible; it knows everything, and the whole universe is its subject."

The Book of Death of the Egyptians, one of their oldest records, says about God: "I am Tum, the creator of heaven, the maker of all creatures who come from the earth; the creator of fertility, the lord of all things, the father of all things, who has created himself; the lord of life, the rejuvenator of the circle of the gods."

Plutarch, in his work on Egyptian mythology, says: "There is only one intelligent being who orders all things; a ruling providence who is placed above all things, and who enjoys veneration, and to whom, among different nations, different names have been given."

Cicero says: "The whole universe is under God's power. By his nature, energy, soul, divinity, or by whatever clearer name may be found, all things are governed."

The Greek Anaxagoras taught: "There is one eternal God, who is the author of all things. He is the divine soul of the world, the infinite wisdom which created out of chaos the world in which we live."

Another Greek, Xenophanes, says: "There is one God greater than all other gods and men, neither in form nor in spirit like unto mortals. He sees and knows everything and rules everything."

Thus we have, amongst the most diverse nations, proof that the basis of their sentiment and thought was their belief in *one Supreme Being*. I will quote one more saying of a celebrated man who belongs to modern times.



Voltaire, the famous poet, philosopher and critic, who during his long life neither enjoyed nor claimed for himself a reputation for faith or piety, in the last days of his life expressed himself thus: "O God! thou whom the universe proclaims God, thou knowest me. Hear my last words. If I have erred, it was because I have inquired after thy law. My heart may have gone astray, but yet it was full of thee. I look into the face of eternity without uneasiness, for I cannot believe that God, who has created me and overwhelmed me with so many blessings, would condemn me when my earthly life has come to an end."

The opinion of a man like Voltaire is full of meaning. He who during his whole life was not able to recognize God, when the end approached threw himself upon God's great, fatherly heart and breathed his last upon it in the belief in him, the eternal God. And how many others who, like him, during their whole life would not believe in the existence of God, have, like him, when the end approached and their spirit was free from earthly things, humbly acknowledged their error!

I will add a few utterances of the most illustrious men of modern times:

The philosopher Spinoza, born in 1632, taught: "Only love to the Eternal can give peace to the soul and satisfaction to the spirit. This love for the eternal arises from the harmony in which man lives with the entire divine nature. God is the inner cause of all, whatever there is—the primary power, and everything has its origin in him."

Moses Mendelssohn says, in his "Phædra:" "Reason and meditation lead our spirit from the sensual impressions of the physical world back to its home, into the realm of thinking beings; first to its equals, to created



beings, who, on account of their mortality, can be conceived of and understood by others. From these it rises to the chief fountain of all that can be comprehended, to that Being who comprehends everything, but who is incomprehensible to all, of whom we know, to our comfort, so much—that everything that is good, beautiful and perfect in the world of matter and in the world of spirit, proceeds from him and is preserved by his power.”

The philosopher Fichte says: “The belief in a divine providence is an active, working power, whose blissful existence everybody who is blessed with spiritual desire has experienced in himself, or is capable of experiencing.”

Thomas Paine says, in his writings: “Were man impressed as fully and as strongly as he ought to be with the belief of a God, his moral life would be regulated by the force of that belief; he would stand in awe of God and of himself, and would not do the thing that could not be concealed from either. To give this belief the full opportunity of force, it is necessary that it act alone. This is Deism.” He says again, in another place: “There is a happiness in Deism, when rightly understood, that is not to be found in any other system of religion. All other systems have something in them that either shocks our reason, or is repugnant to it, and man, if he thinks at all, must stifle his reason in order to force himself to believe in them. But in Deism our reason and our belief become happily united. The wonderful structure of the universe, and everything we behold in the system of the creation, prove to us far better than books can do the existence of a God.” And further he says:

“While man keeps to the belief of one God, his reason unites with his creed. He is not shocked with contradiction and horrid stories. His Bible is the heavens and the earth. He beholds his Creator in all his works, and everything he beholds inspires him with reverence and gratitude. From the goodness of God to all, he learns his duty to his fellow-men, and stands self-reproved when he transgresses it. Such a man is no persecutor.”

Zschokke says, in his “*Alamontade* :” “Man is compelled by his reason to believe in God, and the voice of reason penetrates all sophism.”

Lipsius says: “Who will only believe in divine wisdom when he has understood it with his reasoning power, does not believe in divine wisdom, but only in his own.”

Doctor Stern says, in his “*Religion of Judaism* :” “The consciousness of his own limited reason compels man to believe in the existence of an unlimited one. The feeling of contradiction within himself leads him to the idea of a Being who is perfect unity. The idea of a Deity is not the product of perfect inquiry in the kingdom of nature, but the result of unsatisfied desire to comprehend nature to its uttermost limits. The idea of the existence of a Divine Being is not the result produced by the thinking mind, but proceeds from the vain strife with the limits which the fetters of man’s body have placed upon his free thought.”

Rabbi Kohler says: “The more our views are enlarged, the more we have lifted ourselves out of a narrow, dark valley towards the height of knowledge, the more gloriously is the Divine revealed to us. Childish prejudices, small ideas, remain below us like mists and clouds of the valley ;

an unsatisfied longing after the Good and True draws us continually towards God's throne, as long as earthly desires do not cripple the wings of the spirit." In another place he says: "The more rays of light fall into the human heart, the more brightly will the glowing embers of dark belief break out into bright, cheerful flames, which only light and warm us, instead of igniting and destroying. The more human desires and sentiments find room in our mind, the more deeply and blissfully shall we recognize the power of God within us. Fear throws the Christian fettered and bound at the feet of God, whilst man lifts up his hands longingly towards the loving Father."

Johannes Ronge says, in his book on religion: "The Divine Spirit is the essence and life of nature, and works in it and through it according to eternal laws of universal love and universal wisdom. We call this work the divine providence. Within this divine providence are comprised all mankind, with body and soul. Man and mankind live and exist in it, and depend upon it, not, like animals and slaves, upon the will of their master, but united with God according to the law of nature and the spirit. God is the whole, and man only a part of the harmony of creation, but of equal essence with God. We proceed from God, and are the children of God, as Jesus taught us, and our being rests within his divine, primary existence. Paul, Plato and others taught, thousands of years ago, that we live and exist in God; and the wisest men of our times have taught the same."

A modern authoress, Mme. Sutro-Schuecking, says: "As the light is necessary for the existence of everything, so God, the nameless, the ruler, the Perfect One, is to our soul. I have always considered it vanity to dispute about

the characteristics of the Deity, to try to fathom them, or to form positive opinions about them. That he exists is sufficient. We imagine we feel him within us, within creation, in the working of fate, everywhere. The manner in which he exists, this all-comprising, ruling spirit, whether we call him Jehovah, Allah, God, or Nature, is hidden from us mortals until our death. Why all this strife about the idea of the Perfect One, as he is recognized by all? In this conviction all mankind should lovingly meet, granting everybody the liberty to seek after truth as it suits his individual desire, yet bowing down reverently and humbly before the almightiness of the Highest. That would be the religion of the future, after which the noblest of every nation and every creed should strive."

After the preceding expressions of noble men, I will give the opinion of one who had sunk very low. In the "New Pittaval," Vol. II., the trial of a certain Masch is mentioned,—a man who undoubtedly was one of the greatest criminals that ever lived. He had taken part in more than three hundred burglaries; six times he had been guilty of incendiarism; more than twenty times he had attempted murder, and was guilty of twelve actual murders. And this man, who was intelligent, but in whom a human sentiment had never been aroused, whose eyes had never turned towards heaven, before his end acknowledged his fearful misdeeds and showed sincere repentance. He had found God. A few days before his death he expressed himself as follows: "If I had seen the sun and felt its warmth only one day of my life, and had never seen it again, nobody could convince me that the sun did not exist; my experience and life, since I have come to a knowledge of myself, are such that, how-

ever many temptations may come, however anxious I may feel at times, nobody can take away my faith. Who does not believe in God is capable of everything,—even a murder is nothing to him.”

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The belief in God and in his all-wise guidance is that which gives us a firm hold in all the changes of this life. If we throw it away or lose it, we are lost ourselves; but if we maintain it firmly in our heart, nothing that can happen to us can lead us astray from the path of righteousness or humiliate us.

The ancients tell us the story of the giant Antæus, who could not be conquered in wrestling, and who overcame all strangers who approached him, as long as he remained in contact with his mother, Earth, as long as he had a hold on her. Hercules had no difficulty in lifting him from the ground and strangling him. Thus it is with the firm hold which man has on God. As long as he clings to God he is armed against all enemies and invincible; but whosoever loses this hold, loses all safety and all feeling of safety.

True love to our fellow-creatures is firmly rooted in the love of God and inseparable from it. Without the love of God, true love to our neighbor is impossible.

God asks nothing from us but that we should faithfully and honestly fulfill our duty towards our fellow-creatures; that is the true worship of God;—to act in such a manner that no justifiable reproach can be made to us, and to help the poor and those who suffer, and everybody who is in need of assistance, cheerfully, and as far as it is within our power to do.

The belief in God and in his wise guidance gives us strength and comfort in the hours of bitterest suffering, want and sorrow. A man clinging to the eternal God and believing in him can never despair; whilst he who seeks salvation in another belief, loses all hold in the hours of trial from which no man is spared. The suicide of thousands and thousands proves this again and again.

He who believes himself, by himself, to be able to bear and to conquer the sorrows of life which no earthly man can evade, is mistaken, and will find, at last, that a higher power is necessary to help him, and that only the firm belief and confidence in God's fatherly love can conquer and overcome all obstacles.

Man must arrive at the conviction that in all situations of his life a holy comfort fills his soul, the consciousness of complete dependence upon God, and of the closest union of his soul with God.

God is not the severe, inaccessible judge who delights in condemnation; he is not the idol which demands bleeding sacrifice, but a loving Father of man who, like a human father, is willing to pardon the faults of his children, and only asks that they repent of the wrong which they have done and try to amend themselves.

God does not desire man to be gloomy; those who are cheerful are his dearest children.

He who knows that the all-knowing, fatherly eye watches over him, even in the dark, will be more righteous in his thoughts and actions than he who only fears the eye of man. The believer in God's fatherly love will be firmer and more courageous in misfortune, because he relies upon the almightiness and all-wisdom of God, who will control everything for the best.

That deep confidence in God which is rooted in the love of him, is our strongest hold. Man is easily inclined to despair, and when some misfortune happens to him he stretches his hands toward heaven and laments and asks: Why does this fate happen to me? But there is no fate except an all-loving Father, in whose hands grief and misfortune are changed to bright sunlight, which will bring peace to our soul and defy all storms.

The duties of man towards God are nothing else than duties which spring from conviction. But the actions which proceed from these convictions are the actions of morality, which represents our duty towards ourselves and towards our neighbor. The duty of obedience is also a duty of sentiment towards God. As an action, the entire domain of morality depends upon it.

Conscience is, so to speak, the inner organ of morality. Our relation to God is that of a child to its parent, and is the condition and origin of moral obedience. If God is love, then our loving activity cannot be imagined without our relation to God and his will; when, like children, we cling to him, we live with him in true and lifelike communion. Justice, truth, liberty, love, in fact all moral ideas to which we look upward, appear as divine examples which we try to imitate.

There are men who intentionally reject the belief in God because it is an uncomfortable bridle upon their desires; but millions carry the idea of God and immortality in their hearts, and cherish it as a precious possession in which they live and die. Blessed is that man who knows this feeling and nourishes it carefully.

If we are once sure that there is a God, a living God, whom we know, and who knows us, a new life arises in



us ; the whole universe becomes full of life, our existence has an aim, our grief a remedy. We have a Lord who watches over us and helps us, and mankind is united in a common bond.

Man rejoices in having an ideal before his eyes ; indeed, it is a necessity to him to have one upon every path of his life. He seeks something which unites all perfection within itself, and he finds it in the idea of a Supreme Being, in his view of God.

If we strive after the ideal, we strive after the sublime. The sublimest ideal is God. All ideas which are revealed in the life of nature and of man have their origin in God. They are, as it were, divine ideals which have taken shape and have become real. The belief in a Supreme Being is a belief in a power which watches over us, and from whose influence we are never free from the day of our birth to our death, but are subject to it in every circumstance of life.

To be happy we must, under all circumstances, preserve delight in nature, confidence in man and cheerfulness of mind. This we can do only if we preserve our unchangeable belief in the love of God.

God is an inconceivable, eternal power which, according to unchangeable laws, penetrates the universe, every vein of our little earth, every pulse of the immeasurable life in the structure of the world. If we imagine that God, the spiritual power which rules the world, could be away or lost, the whole universe would fall into ruins. Matter alone, without spiritual unity and power, cannot exist. This is proved by the entire structure of the world.

Living in God is the crown of human life, the highest aim of moral culture, the brightest blossom in which the germs of virtue strive to be developed.

In the pure belief in God there are no sects, no overbearing of one toward the other, because this revelation does not rest upon tradition, but lives distinctly in every one without further mediation, and because in the place where all men live together and recognize the equal rights of all, such overbearing is impossible.

Death! What a world of sorrow lies in this little word! It is a two-edged sword which, while it takes what was dear to us, penetrates deep into our heart, so that our vision grows dim and the world appears shrouded in night, whilst the sun shines upon the path of millions of happy ones, scattering joy in all directions. Only *one* word, as short as this, gives us courage and breathes help, only one: *God!*

God does not repose upon a distant, heavenly throne, letting the machinery of the world go blindly as it will; he himself is the moving power. His breath, his spirit, his hand, guide it in that mysterious manner which we mortals have tried in vain to fathom. And as he is revealed to us as wisdom and love in all the life of creation, in the history of man, in ourselves, in our heart, in our reason, if we strive to seek him and to find him, so it is his wisdom and love which have shaped the world from the beginning in such manner that everything is as it is, and cannot be otherwise; which have foreseen and provided for everything from eternity. Everything is subject to him, the great, complete, wonderful God; the world rests upon his loving heart.

There are people who do not hesitate to make themselves slaves of their fellow-creatures, who crawl before the rich and mighty for the sake of some worldly advantage, yet who will not humiliate themselves before God, to

whom they owe everything. Foolish and graceless men ! Do not throw yourselves in the dust before idols and the mighty of this world ; not before man, but before God, the eternal spirit and the ruler of the world. Before him you should humiliate yourselves, not before man.

Humility before God creates a strong and proud heart before the rich and powerful ; whilst humility before man creates the soul of a slave. Throw yourself in the dust before Him who is your creator and preserver ; before Him who is love, wisdom, and justice. He speaks to you in the whispering of the zephyrs of spring which refresh you, and in the lightning which scatters destruction ; he speaks to you in the whispering of the child and in the howling of the storm. His voice is everywhere. It calls to you, "I am your God, to whom alone you owe thanks for all the good which life offers ; and I also hold over you my protecting hands in the hours of sorrow which I send."

It is characteristic that, in most languages, the name of God is derived from the word *Div*, which means to shine. And the idea of light is constantly united with the consciousness of God. Whatever words man may use to express the idea of a Supreme Being ; as, Primary Power, Primary Reason, Primary Spirit, Primary Being, Spirit of the World, Soul of the World, Spirit of Love, Chief Fountain of Life, Father of All, Creator of All, Father or God,—all these terms give only an imperfect idea of the Supreme Being ; and mortal man can only bow down in humility before the all-comprising grandeur and sublimity of the Supreme Being and worship him in spirit and in truth.

Goethe describes the being of the Eternal One in his "Faust," in the following words:

"Who can name him, and, knowing what he says,  
 Say, 'I believe in Him'? And who can feel,  
 And, with self-violence, to conscious wrong  
 Hardening his heart, say, 'I believe him not'?  
 The all-embracing, all-sustaining One,  
 Say, doth he not embrace, sustain, include  
 Thee? Me? Himself? Bends not the sky above?  
 And earth, on which we are, is it not firm?  
 And over us with constant, kindly smile,  
 The sleepless stars keep everlasting watch!  
 Am I not here gazing into thine eyes?  
 And does not all that is—  
 Seen and unseen, mysterious all—  
 Around thee, and within,  
 Untiring agency,  
 Press on thy heart and mind?  
 Fill thy whole heart with it; and when thou art  
 Lost in the consciousness of happiness,—  
 Then call it what thou wilt,  
 Happiness!—heart!—love!—God!  
 I have no name for it. Feeling is all;  
 Name, sound and smoke,  
 Dimming the glow of heaven!"

And now, dear reader, I ask you once more the question on the title-page of this work: "*Is there not a faith more sublime and blissful than Christianity?*"

## JESUS.

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JESUS was not God, and was God's son in no other sense than that in which all men are the children of God. He was a man like us, and, although infinitely superior, he was not without human weakness, which is particularly observable in his words: "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me!" and in his words: "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

The crown of mankind, and not that of God, belongs to Jesus; and if the Church, after having placed the bloody crown of thorns upon his head, expects to honor him by elevating him to the Godhead, and placing him as far above mankind as an earthly prince believes himself to be, it is *her* fault that the blissful doctrine of love which Jesus taught has been degraded and concealed by dogmas and doctrines. The proof of this we find in all countries where Christianity prevails.

The history of the thirty-three years of Jesus' life has come down to us in scanty and incoherent reports, which are partly legendary and partly so full of the supernatural, that, in proportion to his great importance, we really know very little about him. What we do know of him is perfectly sufficient to place him in a unique position in the history of the world and in the development of religious life.

Information relating to Jesus written by himself does not exist, as he taught his disciples and the people by his spoken word only, as did Con-fu-tse and Buddha. Thomas Jefferson says, in his "Memoirs," that it is a great

loss that Jesus did not write anything himself, and that his doctrines have come to us piecemeal and probably misunderstood. He purified the Jewish creed and taught the most perfect and sublime doctrine of morality which has ever been practiced on earth. It embraced all men, and united them into one family through the bonds of benevolence, love, common want and mutual assistance. But even since the time of the apostle Paul, the simple, sublime doctrine of Jesus has been artificially disfigured.

Among the disciples of Jesus, who were simple people from among the uneducated classes, was probably only one who was able to write,—namely, Matthew, who was a receiver of customs on the shores of the Lake of Galilee; and thus it has happened that, besides the Gospel which he is said to have written, nothing in writing has come to us from the circle of his disciples. The history of Jesus is based upon tradition, and how uncertain, and how much subject to alterations such information as has reached posterity must be, will be doubted by nobody who considers how easy it is to disfigure even the news of the immediate past and the events of the present time. Besides this, the first Christians as well as the disciples were uneducated people, who were not always able to understand what Jesus said. In Jerusalem and Antioch, Christians converted from Judaism and heathenism, Peter and Paul, differ on the point of preserving certain Jewish customs. The Gospels, with the exception of that of Matthew, were probably written in the second century, and the writers were not immediate witnesses of Jesus' life. They were written from verbal traditions only, after several generations had passed away, and with the evident

desire of creating Jesus a God. The accounts of the life of Jesus which we find in the four Gospels cannot be relied upon, for the further reason that they differ from each other in many points. The family tree of Jesus in Matthew is entirely different from that given in Luke. In the account of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Gospels differ considerably, and even contradict each other, so that it is almost impossible to recognize the facts. In the Gospel of John not a word is said about the Ascension, whilst Mark only mentions it in a few vague words. In Matthew x. 5 to 8, Jesus is reported to have said to the Apostles: "Go *not* into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye *not*. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." In Mark xvi. 15, 16, Jesus says: "Go ye into *all the world* and preach the Gospel to *every creature*;" and in chap. xxviii. 19 Matthew contradicts himself by giving Jesus' commandment in these words: "Go ye therefore and teach *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, *of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*." These last words which Matthew puts into Jesus' mouth are the more incomprehensible, as only at the Council of Chalcedon, in the year 325, was the dogma of the divinity of Jesus accepted; and only at the Council of Constantinople, in the year 381, was the dogma of the Holy Ghost promulgated,—a striking proof of the unreliability of the Gospels. We must consider, further, that Paul and the Evangelists took all the dogmas relating to Christ as the Messiah from Jewish cabalistic writings, particularly from the book Fiknua Sohar. From there come the doctrines of the Word having become flesh, of Jesus being the Son of God, of the eternity of the Messiah, of the two natures of the Messiah, of his sinlessness, his



ascension, his sitting at the right hand of God, his expiation, and his office of judge of the world.

We find nothing in the New Testament relating to Jesus' personal appearance, while other writers of the first century give some hints about it. Justinus the Martyr (in the year 150) said that his appearance was not attractive, and that it was by no means remarkable. Clemens of Alexandria (in the year 200) describes his appearance rather as repulsive than attractive. Tertullian (in the year 210) says he was not even possessed of ordinary beauty; and Origen (in the year 230) declared that he was small and deformed, and that his beauty consisted only in his soul and in his life. Of course, all these descriptions are based only upon traditions of several generations, and therefore are worthless; and as there exists no portrait of Jesus made during his lifetime, it is evident that all which exist, however high may be their artistic value, give no real likeness of Jesus, but only show the ideal which inspired the artists who painted them.

As regards the doctrines of the Deity of Jesus, of his being the Son of God, of having been conceived in a supernatural manner by his mother, their origin may be traced to the belief in those times that the gods assumed human shape and cohabited with mortal women. The old mythology tells us that Jupiter impregnated hundreds of women, who gave birth to children of a superior nature. This belief was common among the Greeks and Romans. The Emperor Augustus pretended to be a son of Apollo, and Caligula a son of Jupiter. Tradition tells us that Buddha was begotten by a five-fold beam of light which fell upon Maja, the daughter of an Indian king. The Buddhist reformer Sunkaba came to life through his

mother, the wife of a poor shepherd, being suddenly seized by giddiness and falling upon a stone on which some sacred words were engraved. We know that not only Jews, but also heathen like the Greeks, accepted the doctrine of Jesus. The Greeks took their Father of heaven, Theos, out of their old faith into the new; and they could not refrain from replacing their Apollo by Jesus, so that their Theos, as God of the Christians, might also have a Son.

Thus the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus has its origin in the old heathenism. There is no mention made of the divinity of Jesus in the first three Gospels, nor in the Acts or the Apostles; nor is it mentioned in the Epistle of James. Jesus himself never uttered the thought that he was God, and only spoke of God in the sense that he was the Father of all mankind. When he calls God Father, it does not apply to his own person only, but to all men. He says: "*Our* Father which art in heaven:" *your* Father in heaven; "Be merciful like *your* Father in heaven;" and in the same sense he taught his disciples to pray, "Father, forgive us *our* trespasses."

When Jesus said, "I and the Father are one"—which is explained by the Church as meaning that he is God—he did not mean to say that he considered himself as God, but he wished to express the consciousness that he was one with the will of God. If you, dear reader, make use of the same expression, referring to yourself and your bodily father by saying, "I and my father are one," would you mean that you and your father are one and the same person? Surely not. You would only mean that you and your father are in perfect harmony. And in the same manner we must look at the expression of Jesus in which

he calls God his father, from a reasonable point of view. The Christian Church, in her desire to make Jesus God, overlooks or ignores completely that Jesus expressed himself mostly in parables and metaphors. As such we must receive and explain many of his sayings. If we do this, Jesus will cease to be God, but will retain the true honor of having been an exemplary, sublime man, far beyond his time in his knowledge of God. That Jesus distinctly refused the idea of his own Godhead we find in his answer in Matthew xix.: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God."

Jesus has been called an originator of religion; but religion, which is the principal foundation of all creeds,—namely, the belief in one Supreme Being,—cannot be originated, and is not in need of an originator, for it is deeply rooted in the heart of every man. But where religion has been injured and driven away by sectarian dogmas, it is owing to a want of reason, or to selfishness and passion. Jesus has also been called the Founder of Christianity, but he was not even this. Christianity was developed long after his death. Jesus himself was a Jew, a reformer of Judaism. He had made it his task to purify it from the dross which infected it. He wished to found upon earth a pure spiritual kingdom of God, not a secluded community to worship God in outward forms; and, in this respect, he was more than a reformer, he was an apostle for the whole world, *the creator of the religion of humanity*, in which all men, regardless of race, color or nationality, are equal and brethren. He established the right of liberty of conscience, and it was his desire to lead mankind back to the original freedom of natural laws.

Jesus was the first to proclaim: You must worship God in spirit and in truth. Upon these words is based the structure of eternal religion. He founded the pure veneration of God,—that which all pure souls, filled with a desire for the highest, will practice until the end of all time. An entirely new idea,—the idea of a worship of God based upon purity of the heart and brotherly love of all men,—was brought into the world by him. He founded the great doctrine of the freedom of the spirit, which alone can give peace.

Jesus knew no dogmas; nobody was ever less priestly than he. He who will convince himself that Jesus did not desire to be a priest nor to found a priesthood, he who will have a perfect idea of his humane character,—let him compare the mild doctrines which Jesus pronounced with the violent, hard, autocratic dogmas of the Fathers of the Church, of the popes, and of men like Calvin and Luther, who all seem to have acted upon the principle, that whoever wishes to govern the spirit of men must frighten and crush them. Nobody was more adverse than Jesus to outward ceremonies, which, under the pretense of furthering religion, only too frequently injure and suppress it. Jesus despised everything that did not belong to the religion of the heart. He was totally opposed to hollow ceremonies and asceticism. He did not observe fasting. He preferred the forgiveness of wrong to a sacrifice. Love to God, love to our neighbor, mutual goodwill,—that was the whole of his law.

The appearance of Jesus marks a new phase in the domain of the spirit, the birth of a new view of the world, entirely different from that of antiquity. With his aim, the ennobling and perfecting of mankind, before him, he

recognized with clear eye the fundamental evil and the principal defects of mankind. To struggle against selfishness was his principal task. In his simple words, "Love thy neighbor," there is more wisdom and more blissfulness for mankind than in all the writings of old and new teachers of the Church.

Jesus was not visionary, nor a dreamer, but a friend of mankind, who taught active brotherly love. He was no hero in battle, nor a great statesman whose actions have revolutionized the world. Yet he who was born in a hut, of poor parents, occupies to-day, after nineteen centuries, a position which nobody before or after him ever attained. The more the sublime character of Jesus is purified and delivered from the dross of the Church, the more we recognize in him, not Christ the God, but the sublime man Jesus, holding out his friendly hand to us, all the more lovable, all the more worthy of veneration must he and his doctrines become to us.

We must be particular to distinguish between the Christ of the Church and the historical and ideal Jesus. The former is the symbol of blind, sterile belief; the latter, that of humanity extending bliss and happiness. The most striking features of the latter, of the ideal Jesus, are toleration, gentleness and love; whilst the Christ of the Church has been made the motive for persecution and fanaticism.

Hofferichter says, in his "Life of Jesus: " "The greatness and importance of Jesus' life are not in the fact that he has been worshiped as a God by later generations, that men have bent their knees before him as before a heavenly apparition; but in this,—that he recognized religion as a movement of the heart which cannot be forced; as a

blossom of the human spirit which can flourish only in freedom, which can ripen into beautiful, rich fruit only in the air of freedom. He has demanded the right of self-determination for the fuller development of the human spirit, and has founded upon this self-determination the dignity of man, the idea of morality. Just because we see Jesus as a *man*, we place him so high, he appears so worthy of admiration and veneration."

And if Jesus were to return to earth to-day, how would he be received? Radenhausen, in his work on Christianity, replies to this question as follows: "In the first place, all churches would be closed to him as a teacher, because he was not an educated and ordained priest. He would not be permitted to hold mass-meetings, to teach his doctrine, which would at once be declared as heretical and irreligious, because it is contradictory to the existing order of things and to the recognized dogmas of belief."

This view is only too true; and we might add, that if Jesus were to return to this earth, he would be crucified again, and by those who worship him as a God and call themselves his disciples, while they persecute every one who believes differently with hatred and contempt. They would be the first to raise the murderous cry, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" and they would not cease until their thirst for blood had been satisfied.

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The greater part of the life of Jesus, covering the time from his twelfth to his thirtieth year, is wrapped in complete darkness; and the accounts of his death, as well as the circumstances surrounding the same, contain so much that is miraculous and supernatural, that it is difficult to



determine what has really taken place. His birth and the events connected with the same are likewise hidden under the veil of myth, so that in this respect a clear, historical insight is unattainable.

As regards the year of his birth, considerable doubt has arisen of late whether our Christian era does not begin five years too late, and we should count 1889, now, instead of 1884. Professor Sattler, of Munich, has lately succeeded in establishing this as a positive fact; also in fixing the date of his death, on the 7th of April, 783, after the foundation of Rome.

The birth of Jesus seems to have taken place within the last years of the reign of Herod the Great. But it is scarcely credible that the twenty-fifth of December was the actual birthday of Christ. This date was not fixed until the fourth century as Christmas Day.

All information is wanting in regard to the youth of Jesus from his twelfth to his thirtieth year. But if Jesus, as the Bible teaches us, was already, before his birth, expected as a phenomenal appearance, so that the Wise Men of the East, guided by a star, came to worship the new-born King of the Jews, how could it be possible that his own parents, who surely must have known everything about the miraculous circumstances of his birth, were so little impressed by their importance, as must have been the case, in view of no mention relating to it? How could it be possible that, when Jesus was twelve years old and preached in the temple, he was so unknown that all sorts of questions were addressed to him relating to his origin, his parents and his family?

An impenetrable darkness covers the life of Jesus from his twelfth until his thirtieth year; nor have we any



explicit information about his parents and his brothers and sisters. We possess only very scanty information upon this subject in the Apocrypha; but what little they do tell us is so much interwoven with miracles, which have in their origin the motive to represent him as the Son of God, that very little reliance can be placed upon it.

Even about the place of his birth the reports are contradictory. By some students Bethlehem is named, by others Nazareth. There are other contradictions and errors revealed in the New Testament. Matthew mentions the name of James as that of the father of Joseph. In Luke he is called Eli. One reckons fifty-six generations, and the other only forty-two. Matthew says that Joseph and Mary fled with the child to Egypt, whilst according to another Evangelist they remained in Judea. Luke knows nothing of Herod's persecution and the murder of the Innocents. Luke mentions a census which is said to have been taken under the Roman Pro-Consul Quirinius; but this census, according to the reliable Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, was not taken until ten years later. The legend of the Wise Men from the East seems to have originated from an image representing the birth of the Persian God of the Sun and Redeemer, Mithra. Such an image, carved in stone, has been found in the catacombs of Rome, representing the mother with the child Mithra in her lap. The child's head is surrounded by a halo. Three men are kneeling before her; they are dressed in Persian garments and offer presents; a star is visible on one side. As the Christians have celebrated the twenty-fifth day of December as the birthday of Jesus,—which is also the birthday of Mithra,—there can be no doubt

that the entire legend of the Wise Men of the East is not of Christian origin, but proceeds from Persian mythology.

Christianity teaches that Jesus was born without sin, and like no other man, and contrary to the laws of nature, and that he was free from all human weakness. If this really was the case, if he was a god, how can his purity and his virtue be considered as something peculiar, something excellent and glorious? He could not be otherwise. But if he was a man, he must have had human failings; and the Evangelists say themselves that on different occasions he showed grief, anxiety, vexation and wrath; that is to say, human weakness. This human weakness was shown most completely when he prayed to God before his death, "Father, all things are possible unto thee: take away this cup from me." He expressed thus the wish that he might be spared the pain which was before him. And even on the cross he exclaimed, "My God! my God! Why hast thou forsaken me?"—a proof that he was sensible to the agonies of death. How different, how much more sublime and heroic, was the death of the great Grecian philosopher Socrates! He also died as a martyr of a purer doctrine. He was condemned to take the poisoned cup, and emptied it not only without complaint, but with the greatest joyfulness and peace of mind, conversing with his disciples, who surrounded him.

But even his failings cannot darken the divine idea of Jesus. Through these failings he beams upon us in the fullest and purest light. The deepest conviction of the existence of God, the purest sincerity, the most perfect confidence in God, the most complete self-denial, the highest moral purity and the most genuine piety, were alive

in Jesus. These characteristics appear in all his sayings and actions. And with all he was mild, benevolent, self-sacrificing, of cheerful temperament, and animated by the most ideal love for mankind. And in this love for mankind, in connection with the prophecies of the Old Testament, the belief in his mission as Messiah had its origin. As Jesus was a child of his people and of his time, we cannot be astonished when we find in them the firm expectation of his early return, and the belief in the power and glory to erect the kingdom of the Messiah, which was to make all mankind happy. And this belief, and the later disappointment, again prove that Jesus was not free from human weakness.

A clergyman in Hessia, Elssner, has lately published a work in which he speaks of Jesus as follows: "Jesus appears as a man who has given a new religious, moral form to the world, who has conceived and proclaimed the eternal religion of the Spirit, who lighted the light of spiritual revelation, that it might shine through the darkness of night in which the nations were walking. He has tried to elevate degraded humanity to the freedom of the children of God. He has torn in pieces the veil in which selfish, deceitful priests have shrouded religion. He has put aside the dead letter of the law, however sacred it might appear, with its ceremonies and sacrifices, its rites and its priesthood, and replaced it by a doctrine the purity and simplicity of which surpass everything which the wise men of all times have ever produced. He has indicated, as the true essence of all religion, perfect equality of all and the eternal law of love."

If we turn now to Jesus' activity as a teacher, we must connect him with John the Baptist. John preached re-

pentance, the kingdom of heaven, and baptized all those who acknowledged it. Among those who followed the call of John was Jesus, who also repented and was baptized. He was deeply impressed by the words and annunciations of John. He fled from the human crowd to be alone with himself and his thoughts, and went into the desert. When he had collected himself in solitude, and regained complete peace of mind, and returned, he received the news that John had been beheaded and had become a victim to his noble calling. Who was to be John's spiritual heir? Who should carry further his message? This question decided the future of Jesus. He felt called upon to be John's successor and to continue his work, and now he began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." His words, so simple and yet so powerful, inspired the people, but made the Pharisees, scribes and priests his enemies. Jesus was different from them. His words and his actions were in harmony, whilst the former clung to the word, but did not act accordingly. Therefore the people rushed to him; and, remembering the sayings of the prophets and the preaching of John, they recognized in him the promised Messiah who was to deliver Israel.

The Jewish origin of Jesus can be recognized in his sayings. They bear the rabbinical stamp, and his doctrine is founded principally upon that which he had appropriated during his study of the Talmud. With a decided will and unfailing judgment he gathered from the Talmud the pearls which it contains; and as a preacher for the people he knew how to present them in graphic description to the minds of his hearers. But Jesus taught a doctrine which was opposed to the Jewish creed, which

was founded upon the principle that God is not only the Lord of Israel, but the Father of all men, and that all men are brethren. The doctrine of Jesus is contained in the idea of the worship of God in spirit and in truth; not in fine words, but in good actions; in the sanctification of our soul and of our whole life; in the perfect devotion to a divine providence; in repentance for sin; in cheerful forgiveness, and in the belief in a heavenly Father and brotherly love. He would not allow the meanest to be despised; and, about the observance of the Sabbath, he taught that the Sabbath was for man, not man for the Sabbath. About the being and destiny of man he preached: You are the sons and children of God, proceeding from the Spirit of God. He indicated death as a transition to a higher existence. He called the universe the word of God and supported by his spirit; the kingdom of heaven he explained as a state of spiritual existence which we can acquire here, and which we can make our own by love, justice and virtue.

How sublime and lofty are his sayings: "Love your enemies." "Bless them that curse you." "Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." "When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." "Judge not, that ye be not judged." "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Son, be of good cheer: thy sins are forgiven thee." "Honor thy father and thy mother." "Thou shalt love the Lord

thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "First cast the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote of thy brother's eye." "Not seven times, but until seventy times seven shalt thou forgive." "Let your communication be Yea, yea, and Nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." "What you have done to the poor and sick and suffering, ye have done it unto me." Wisdom and kindness are the contents of the Sermon on the Mount. And can there be more beautiful parables than those of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan?

The philosopher Buisson, who lived in the last century, says, in connection with Jesus' Sermon on the Mount: "When Jesus thus speaks to us, it is not necessary to add dogmas and miracles for the purpose of making us believe in these divine words. It is sufficient to possess a human heart. From the words: 'Blessed are they that mourn,' to where he says: 'Father, forgive them: they know not what they do,'—all this is not enough for you, all this is not sufficiently divine for you. You want to have more. You must have something that speaks to your senses—an angel, a voice from out the air, water changed into wine, etc. A seeming disorder in nature has more effect on you than the eternal order. A fig-tree which suddenly withers and dies tells you something; a lily in the field, which unfolds itself in modest splendor, tells you nothing. The sun which stands still at the bidding of a human being, seems to you more wonderful than the sun and all the worlds which through infinite space follow the eternal harmony of motion set down by God. A simple school-



child now-a-days, at an early age, learns to discredit and ridicule the miracles with which the history of all old nations abounds; but it is expected to make an exception in the case of Jewish history, and to believe in the miracles which are mentioned in the Bible."

We have already mentioned that many expressions of Jesus must only be taken figuratively; for instance, Matthew v. 29, 30, 39 and 40, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." "And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."—Chap. xix. 24: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."—Chap. x. 34: "I came not to send peace, but a sword;" and others. In the last-mentioned place he says: "I have not come to bring peace, but the sword." This can only be taken in the sense of the spiritual sword, not the weapon of war, which is intended to take man's life. If Mark (xvi. 16) lets Jesus say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not *shall be damned*," we cannot comprehend this, in view of the mild nature of Jesus, and must consider these words an addition of the Evangelist. It has been stated in the beginning of this chapter that in many respects the Evangelists cannot be relied upon. The



sayings of Jesus, taken all in all, prove clearly and irrefutably that he was not filled with hatred, but only with love, and that he did not look upon human misery as a punishment inflicted by a cruel Supreme Being thirsting for blood and vengeance. He had completely overcome the harsh representation of old Israel. In his faith there lived only a loving, patient and kind God, and he advised men to lay the foundation of their welfare by brotherly love and righteousness.

The Evangelists are very anxious to relate miracles which Jesus is said to have performed, or which are otherwise connected with his person. We are told that he was born of a virgin, and that his birth was announced by the appearance of a star. It is said that he cured the blind, and the deaf and dumb, the lame and the lepers, by a mere word, or by the touching of his garment, and that he even raised the dead. Thousands of hungry people he fed with a few loaves; he made wine out of water. He walked upon the waters, and calmed the tempest by threats. He sent a miraculous catch into the net of the fishermen, and made the barren fig-tree wither and die suddenly by a mere word. At his death the sun is said to have been darkened, and the earth to have trembled, and the rocks to have split open. In the hour of his death the veil in the temple of Jerusalem was torn in twain. After he had been buried, he is said to have risen again, and to have lived forty days on earth, and then to have ascended into heaven.

That Jesus effected the cure of sick people can be believed without considering it a miracle. It is possible, and has been established as an historical fact, that such cures have not only been performed by the followers of Jesus, but by

his enemies. But when Jesus accompanied these cures with such words as "Thy faith hath made thee whole," he only wished to indicate that the origin of these cures was not in a miraculous power within himself, but in the spiritual state of the patients.

To explain these miracles—which has frequently been attempted by Christian priests—would be to attribute an importance to them which they no longer possess in the nineteenth century. They can be easily explained by the fact that at the time of Jesus, as is plainly shown in the New Testament, mankind was absolutely greedy after miracles. It saw, and wanted to see, a miracle in everything. It would not believe anything unless it was shrouded in the cloak of a miracle. And should we be astonished that such things occurred nineteen hundred years ago, when we see that even to-day, and in civilized countries, there are many people who still believe in miracles; and when, to this day, the Christian priests proclaim these miracles as truth, and thus mislead and stupefy the people?

Let us now take a brief review of the doctrine of Jesus. The doctrine of Jesus is not founded alone upon a deep knowledge of human nature, but, more than any other, it is adapted to human wants. It contains everything that man needs to guide him in a path of life, according to his nature and his destiny. It does not offer him only dry doctrines, which he has no inner desire to follow, but it speaks to his soul, it warms his heart, by appealing not only to his reason, but to his moral nature. The doctrine of Jesus remains the sublimest creation which has ever proceeded from the human mind. It is the most beautiful code of laws which has ever been established. Not by

his death, but by his doctrine of love, Jesus has become the Redeemer of mankind.

The poetical legend of the Bible tells us how a star announced to the Wise Men of the East the birth of Jesus ; thus the teaching of Jesus is a shining star which leads us to the sanctuary of humanity. The word of Jesus, when it was first heard, appeared like lightning in the darkness of night ; and if it has not yet grown to the *full* light of day, it surely will be so ; and when mankind has passed through all the paths of error, it will return to his word as the immortal expression of its belief and its hope.

Rothe says: "The great and lasting attainments which mankind, on its path, will reach, will be the echo of the voice of a Man known to only a limited circle, who had no power, no position, no wealth and no learning ; a voice, which was heard eighteen hundred years ago, of one who lived but a short time, who has left us the power and depth of his love of God and man. In this way Jesus has given to the mortals of this world his own pure views of the being of God."

Kalthoff says, in his "Life of Jesus:" "Place before men an ideal of virtue as high as you like, you can only inspire them with enthusiasm when you show them men who have devoted themselves entirely to its service. Abstract truth cannot get hold of the heart. *Men* are required who have striven after truth, in which this abstract truth has become reality and purity of character, and has assumed a concrete form. And who can show us a man who more vigorously and more purely has striven after the moral ideal than Jesus?"

Renan concludes his "Life of Jesus" with the following words: "Jesus does not belong to those alone who

call themselves his disciples. He is the common honor of all who have a human heart in their bosom. His glory does not consist in this—that he is excluded from history; a greater honor is done to him when we prove that history without him is incomprehensible.”

*The doctrine of Jesus is the gospel of all mankind.*

## PRAYER.

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What is prayer? It is a living form and offspring of faith, by which we open our minds to the fountain-head of all life, all reason and all good, to the always ready help of God, to the always present influence of his spirit.

The late Frederick Muench, who has spoken and written so many good and true words, expressed himself in his later years as follows: "If man, in full consciousness of his earthly joy, in the rejoicing over an unhoped-for happiness or an unexpected assistance, looks gratefully up toward the only source of his existence, to that love which comprises all life, which fills the whole universe, there could be no insincerity in this sentiment. Nor could we suppress our natural instinct, when, surrounded by dangers against which our weakness is of no avail, or in any other period of distress, we throw ourselves, as it were, into the arms of the Almighty, like a child in trouble and anxiety clinging to the arm of its father. Nor is it self-deception, if, in contemplation of the splendor, the glory and infinite greatness of nature, we are overcome by our feelings and kneel down in prayer before that almighty spirit which we can only imagine, before that wisdom which reveals itself in the greatest as well as in the smallest. And it is no deception if the guilty man, under the pressure of the deepest shame and repentance, turns his eyes upward and asks imploringly for forgiveness which no man can grant him, and for strength to do good which no man can bestow upon him."

Above all, we must gain the conviction that it is not God who is in want of our prayer, but ourselves; for prayer is the most important, the surest, if not the only effectual means of vivifying our moral sense, the power to do our duty and the active love for our fellow-creatures. Prayer makes us free; it calms the troubled heart bowed down by grief and anxiety; it protects us against impure and sinful thoughts. And if the human heart is laden with heavy guilt, or with a wrong which unceasingly torments and troubles it and embitters life, how soothing will be the effect of the simple words with which we turn to God: "Forgive us our trespasses"!

Glorious and powerful is the effect of prayer in the hour of grief, when it purifies us from the dross of life and draws us into the purest sphere of the Supreme Being, who, full of mercy and compassion, looks down upon all human weaknesses and passions. Great is the power of prayer for the sick and suffering. It will not remove bodily pains, but it will teach us patience and humble contentment with the will of the Almighty. God is our best friend and counselor in all that touches us joyfully or painfully. We can trust only to him in our highest happiness and our most profound sorrow.

Jesus has taught us how to pray,—not with words, not with the thoughtless reading or repeating of certain forms which the Church has taught, and which has been degraded to a shallow habit that is likely to lead us to hatred and contempt of prayer, and that robs it of all blissful results. We should pray in our thoughts which come from the heart; these thoughts are like the angels which, according to the beautiful biblical legend, were seen by Jacob in his dream ascending toward heaven.

The most beautiful and precious gift which Jesus has left us, which unites man with God by a bond of love, is the exquisite prayer which begins with the words "Our Father." If we turn to God with this prayer, with all our heart and mind, our soul will open, and faith, hope, charity and courage will enter into it.

Many people think that man is not in need of prayer, because God, without our praying, knows what we desire and what we need. That sounds very well, but, after all, it is nothing but the result of human selfishness, which wants to obtain certain benefits, but will not bow down before God and thank him for them. Foolish men! Does the bodily father not know the wants of his child? and, for that reason, should a child never turn to his father to express a wish? Tear the bond of love, and you tear the child from his father's heart; you drive him out into the cold, strange world, and rob him of the blissful feeling of love.

And are there not many things which torment your heart and trouble it, where human help is of no avail? If one of your beloved ones lies on a sick-bed, and you gather the most experienced doctors around him, will you not turn in prayer to the Eternal Father and ask: "Save him"? Or if your child, on whom you hang with all your heart, and whom you would see happy and good,—if this child is led astray, and your admonitions are of no avail, will you not turn to God with the prayer to lead him back to the right path? Such a prayer of the crushed heart has often been fulfilled.

What a mighty assistance is prayer in the education of children from their tenderest age! We should not fill their heads with irrational dogmas, which is too frequently



the case; but we should impress the child, from its earliest age, with the idea that there is a Supreme Being, to whom it must look up with reverence and whose blessing it must implore. That is a much better, more reasonable and effective means than severity, scolding and violence. And if these means are neglected, this neglect will be avenged in after years; for those who have been educated without being impressed with the benefit of prayer, have often become ungodly and unhappy people. I remember a man who, a short time ago, complained to me of the disobedience and waywardness of his son; and he added, "I have beaten the boy many times, but it does no good." When I asked him: "Have you ever prayed with your child?" he cast down his eyes and was silent. How many parents, like this man, think that they can educate their children by degrading ill-usage! A fatal mistake! Only love and, from its earliest childhood, the impression upon the mind of the child to turn toward God, will enable us to educate good men—not severity and ill-treatment, which only harden the character. There are families in which corporal punishment is considered the essence of education. The result is that they become more degraded from day to day. And there are families where a harsh or unkind word is never heard, and where the children steadily progress toward the good and righteous. In this instance, love and moral earnestness, which are self-conscious of their duty, are the educators.

The scientist and philosopher, Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert, speaks of prayer as "the family remedy for every circumstance of the mind and the body, strengthening, cheering and comforting. The family remedy, which our forefathers used at the beginning and at the end of the

day's work; which kept them healthy and strong in spirit, and led them on their pilgrimage, has unfortunately disappeared in these days. Formerly, even kings and heroes were not ashamed to begin their tasks with prayer, and were glad to acknowledge this."

Oh! it was a beautiful, sublime and blissful habit, when the head of the family, the rich as well as the poor, began the day's work with a prayer, in which wife and children and servants—the entire household—joined. To-day many a one smiles contemptuously at this habit of former days; but this united beginning of the day's work had a most blissful influence on all who took part in it; it was a pledge of union and peace; and, in those days, there were fewer unhappy marriages and wayward children.

This beautiful custom prevailed in my father's house; and to my last breath I shall not forget an incident which took place there. My mother was dead, and my father, a cheerful, pious old man, my young wife and myself, lived together. One morning, when my father entered the room and had pleasantly saluted my wife, we sat down to prayer. Whilst he was praying I noticed that his voice grew weaker and weaker. "Let me finish the prayer, father," I said; but he, conscious of his approaching end, and wishing to continue his prayer until the last moment, merely shook his head. His voice sank lower and lower. I embraced him: he pressed my hand and closed his eyes forever. The last word on his lips was a prayer. Whoever has seen, as I have, a man dying in prayer, can form an idea of the high dignity, the sanctity and the blissfulness of it.

Yet many people are ignorant of this blessing. Any one who has been a witness of a scene in which the lives

of many people were in danger, will see how even those who have never prayed before, and have sneered and laughed at those who prayed, have knelt down and stretched their hands toward God and implored him to help them; and how the scoffers and scorers showed themselves at such a moment as the greatest cowards, whilst those who were filled with a blissful confidence in God and contentment with his will, remained calm and courageous. There is an old saying that necessity teaches us to pray; but those are to be pitied whom despair and want have to drive to prayer. How many thanks do we owe to God for all the good which he has done for us! And should our heart not tell us to offer a prayer of thanks to the Giver of all these blessings? Prayer has a great and blissful influence, whether it is a prayer to ask a blessing, or to return thanks. When fear, anxiety, wrath, need, grief and care, fill your heart, then turn to God and open it before him. Then you will find peace; your anxiety and fear will give place to new confidence and courage; he will show you a way out of your grief and need; your anger will be softened and your sorrows will be comforted. And if at night you turn restlessly on your bed, and can find no sleep in your excitement, then turn to God, then pray. Prayer has a wonderfully soothing power—much more so than all the remedies which physicians might order, which only affect the body, and have nothing to do with the soul.

Prayer brings peace to our minds; and the peace of the heart leads to all that is good. What we feel in our innermost hearts cannot deceive; and the millions of hands, sighs and prayers which, for thousands of years past, have been lifted and sent up to God, cannot have been directed into empty space.

I will quote a few sayings of celebrated men, expressing their opinion on prayer. The excellent Theodore Parker, who had to suffer so much on account of his free and fearless mind, in a letter to a friend, in February, 1859, wrote as follows: "To me, prayer is a natural and most delightful exercise. It is this: I feel conscious of the presence of the infinite power, mind and love which makes and governs the universe; I feel that it is close to me. Then, conscious of that dear presence, I think over the blessings I have, and the use I make of them. I remember the wrong things I have done and I think of the right things I ought to do; I recollect my joys and my sorrows, my hopes and my fears. So my prayer is an act of gratitude, of penitence (if I have done wrong), of aspiration and of joy."

In his "Lectures on Religion," Dr. S. Stern says: "We have often been asked what is the real object of prayer. We praise the greatness and splendor of God. Do we think that our weak words can glorify Him whose praise the whole universe sings without ceasing? We thank him for the blessings which he has bestowed upon us. If the gratitude is in our hearts, he has recognized it before we have expressed it with our lips; but if it is only on our lips, dare we attempt to deceive the Omniscient? We implore him for help and assistance, that he may send down his blessings, and that he may keep us from evil. Can we, by the words of our mouth, shake the determination with which in his wisdom he rules the world? Finally, we acknowledge our sins, and ask for mercy and forgiveness from him, the almighty and all-loving Father. But he has long known what we are about to confess; and what we implore he has granted long before, if we have

turned toward him with full repentance. There is only one form of true prayer—the longing sigh, the unspeakable desire for closer, more spiritual union with the Being of the Godhead.”

The well-known Abbe Lamennais expressed himself as follows: “Does not your heart feel easier, your soul more satisfied, after you have prayed? Prayer makes us feel less the grief which affects us, and enjoy more purely the blessings which are granted to us. It gives us additional strength to bear the former, and mixes a heavenly perfume with the latter. What are you doing here on earth?—and have you nothing to ask of Him who has placed you here? You are travelers who are seeking a home. Do not go your way with head bowed down: lift up your eyes to see the right way. Heaven is your home; and if you look toward heaven, is there nothing that moves within you? Is there no desire within you?—or has this desire been quieted? There are many who say, ‘What is the use of prayer? God is too great, too high above us, to listen to such miserable creatures.’ But who has created these miserable creatures? Who has given them feeling, thought and speech, if not God himself? And if he has been so good to us, will he leave us and drive us away? Indeed, I tell you, whoever says in his heart that God despises his own work, blasphemes God. There are others again who say, ‘What is the use of prayer? Does not God know better than we what we want?’ God *does* know better than you, but he desires that you should ask him for it; for God himself is your first want, and to pray to him means to begin to own him. The father knows the wants of his child; but should that prevent the child from saying a word of thanks or prayer to his father? The wind

blows over the fields and withers the plants so that they bow down to the ground; but, refreshed by the dew, they lift up their thirsty heads again. There are scorching winds that pass over the soul of man and wither it."

These are the thoughts of three well-known and celebrated men—one a Protestant, the other a Jew, and the third a Catholic. They do not all agree in details, but they all agree in this—that prayer is a necessity for the human heart, and that it has a blissful effect upon man.

But there are foolish and superstitious prayers. Whoever expects from God supernatural effects, either direct—that is to say, that the order of nature should be suspended for the benefit of the supplicant—or indirect—namely, to try and induce God to interfere with nature's laws in order to please an individual or nations—proves that he has no idea of God's greatness and the unchangeable laws of the universe. Such cases frequently occur; as when a church-community prays God to send rain for the benefit of the harvest. In some countries they make processions and pilgrimages for such purposes. The fulfillment of such a prayer would be in contravention of the laws of nature. In another parish, which is perhaps not many miles distant from the first, the very opposite conditions may prevail: whilst the former are in want of rain, the harvest of the other may suffer from too much. Indeed, it is scarcely possible to believe that in civilized countries there are people who are so foolish, who have so little idea of God and the world, as to think that such prayers will be granted.

But it is not only the uneducated classes of the community that commit such acts of folly: it is their priests; for the communities themselves can do nothing without

their direct co-operation. It is not more than ten years ago that, not a single priest, but a *Conference* of the Diocese of Unterwalden, in Switzerland, ordered six processions to St. Anthony for the purpose of allaying a cattle-disease.

Even Luther prayed at a time of continued drought as follows: "We pray so much for rain, and we have prayed so often; and if thou dost not grant our prayer, the godless will say that thy dear Son has lied; for he has said: 'What you ask of the Father in my name, he will grant unto you.' And they would accuse thee and thy dear Son of lying. I know that we cry unto thee from the depth of our hearts. Why dost thou not listen to us?" If Luther lived to-day, he would pray very differently.

And we have astounding proofs that there are to this day, not only among the uneducated, but among the clergy, men who entertain these absurd ideas of the efficacy of prayer; and we find them even among the learned. Professor Brooks, in Phelps, N. Y., toward the end of November, 1882, shortly before the transit of Venus took place, addressed a request to the churches to provide special prayers for clear weather on the day of the transit, the 6th of December.

Lord Palmerston gave an excellent reply to the Scotch clergy in 1853, when they requested the Government to order a day of general fasting and penitence, to allay the plague of the cholera, which was then raging in Great Britain. He returned their request with the reply that the conditions of this world depended upon natural laws, and the welfare of mankind depended again upon the observation of these laws. The principal remedies against



the spreading of the cholera were cleanliness, light, air and wholesome food, which would act more effectively than fasting. Activity is better than penitence. It was now autumn; and, before the heat returned, sufficient time would elapse to extirpate the causes of the plague, particularly by an improvement in the dwellings of the poor. If this were done, all would be well; else the cholera would surely come again, *in spite of all praying and fasting of a united but inactive nation.*

The times when natural phenomena, such as inundations, earthquakes, bad harvests, fire and epidemics, were considered as a punishment of God for our trespasses, have fortunately ceased, or are near extinction; and, with them, the belief in miracles and wonders will soon become a thing of the past.

But, besides these foolish and superstitious prayers, there are some equally unworthy and godless. Among these, the most repulsive is that false service of God in which a *Te Deum* is chanted after a battle, when thousands of victims and mutilated men are lying on the field; or when two nations war with each other, and the priests of both pray for victory instead of for peace.

Another equally godless prayer is that for a "plentiful stranding," which was often heard in former days in the churches of the "Frische Nehrung." What is the meaning of a prayer for a plentiful stranding? The Frische Nehrung is a narrow strip of land which stretches between the "Frische Haffe," in East Prussia, and the Baltic, and which is inhabited by poor fishermen. This small strip of land is of great danger to mariners, and frequent shipwrecks occur near that spot. The prayer for a plentiful stranding means nothing but that ships shall perish there,

that the inhabitants may get possession of the cargo of the wreck. Is it possible that a priest can lend himself to utter such an ungodly prayer?

A clergyman has frequently advertised in the public press to pray for any particular purpose at the cheap rate of seventy-five cents per prayer. The name of this "reverend" gentleman is William Marshall, of Clark County, Kentucky.

The Archpriest Popoff published in the year 1880, in Perm, Russia, a "practical" prayer, in which he gives instructions to what saints certain prayers should be addressed. Amongst these we find appropriate prayers for those who wish to be advanced in public service, to obtain a situation, to buy goods cheap and sell them dear, to discover a thief, to marry a daughter quickly and profitably, to allay the devil and evil spirits, etc. The author of this book, as we have said before, is a priest of high standing in the Greek Church.

One of the most revolting prayers that ever passed the lips of man was found among the effects of a certain John Ward, a miser, who died about thirty years ago in Hackney, England. The prayer, which is written in his own handwriting, reads as follows: "O Lord! thou knowest that I have nine estates in the city of London, and likewise that I have lately purchased an estate in fee-simple in the County of Essex; I beseech thee to preserve the two counties of Middlesex and Essex from fire and earthquakes; and as I have a mortgage in Hertfordshire, I beg of thee to have an eye of compassion on that county; and for the rest of the counties, thou mayest deal with them as thou art pleased. O Lord! enable the banks to answer all their bills, and make my debtors good men. Give a

prosperous voyage and return to the *Mermaid* sloop, because I have insured it; and as thou hast said the days of the wicked are but short, I trust in thee that thou wilt not forget thy promise, as I have purchased an estate in reversion, which will be mine upon the death of that profligate young man, Sir I. L——. Keep my friends from sinking, and preserve me from thieves and housebreakers; and make all my servants so honest and faithful that they may attend to my interests, and never cheat me out of my property, night or day.”

A few years ago, a public service was held every Wednesday in the business-part of New York which was attended principally by men of business. It occurred frequently that letters from near and far were sent to these prayer-meetings to ask for prayers for certain purposes. About one hundred of these letters arrived in one day. Some of these written requests asked for prayers for the conversion of those belonging to another denomination, but the majority of them related to worldly affairs. One man wanted a prayer to obtain a situation; another for money to pay his rent; a lady living in Albany wished to remove to a prettier city; a man in Ohio desired a favorable decision in a lawsuit pending in the Supreme Court of that State. Each one of these prayers was limited to five minutes. One was rattled off quickly after the other; and it not unfrequently happened that a handful of these letters were read aloud, and then one or more of those present prayed for the writers.

Can it be pleasing to God that a man who has confessed to the priest a sin which he has committed, should be ordered, by way of penance, to say thirty or forty times the Lord's Prayer or the *Ave Maria*? Does not such a

task, which is equally degrading for intellect and mind, prostitute the dignity and blissfulness of prayer?

Such aberration of mind, such abuse of prayer, must be deeply regretted by every well-thinking man,—all the more as it must lead to the undermining of the high dignity and blissfulness of prayer.

And is there a man, however honorable and good he may be, however faithfully he may fulfill his duty, whose faith does not require strengthening from time to time? There is no better and no more effective method of doing this than the resort to prayer and the cheerful looking up to God. An old poet, Tscherning, says :

“Strike ! strike at heaven’s door :

With words of strong faith come,  
God’s helping hand implore ;

And soon, from heaven’s dome,  
His blessings down will pour  
On hand, on heart and home.

“ If God your hand but guide,

His blessings still will stay ;

But if he turn aside,

Work deftly as you may,

Your labor and your pride

Will pass in shame away.”

And this poet is right : *everything depends upon God’s blessing.*

Truly, many families where coldness, strife and contention rule, would be better off if they lifted their heart to God. Prayer makes us gentle and unites us. In many families peace does not reign ; husbands and wives make each other’s lives unbearable, and set a bad example to the children. If these people, instead of giving way to their selfishness and seeking the mote in their brother’s

eye, but not the beam in their own, would turn to God in prayer, peace would be restored. Prayer is followed by unspeakable blessings. O ye poor ones, who look down scornfully upon those who pray and look up to their Creator, how many infinite blessings and inner joys you lose !

Common prayer in church by the assembled community, the so-called service of God, has also an elevating, beneficial and ennobling effect. I say the "so-called" service of God, because the name is a wrong one; for when we pray to God we do not render him a service, but ourselves. Who has not experienced the sublime sentiment which is aroused by public worship? Pecant, in his work on this subject, writes: "In such moments it seems as if the veil which hides the spiritual world were torn away. All cares and selfish endeavors are silenced; the sanctity of our destination is revealed to our spirit; the great religious ideas which we would try in vain to present to ourselves in solitude, appear as if surrounded by a new and unexpected glory; the deepest chords of our hearts are touched; we see clearly before us the highest purpose of our existence; the human idea, penetrated by the infinite, attracts us and acts most powerfully on our innermost feelings."

Another author, J. C. Scholz, writes: "One great idea lives in us all,—the feeling of human frailty and the feeling of an equal, eternal hope. Impure desires, which turn into annoying cares, are toned down; the soul rises on the wings of devotion to eternal love, which is all-preserving. The community is at prayer. Everybody recovers himself, takes new confidence, power and courage. However simple may be the music of the holy

song, it is not the harmony of the music which comforts us, but the harmony of hearts and thoughts and hopes. And, what man has read outside in the kingdom of nature, or what he has experienced in the struggle of life; what he may have won or lost, here alone he recognizes the value of his life and of his character. Here he fructifies the little seed which he has found, or which he has sown within him.

“The common worship of God is a means of promoting brotherly love, and of furthering noble resolutions.

“If we look at the life of the world, we find that selfishness is the mainspring of its feverish activity. The language of the heart is of no effect; love is conquered by malice; gain and enjoyment are the watchwords of the day; the best man is seldom the most respected; he stands alone. In the desire of every one to prevail over others, the gain of one becomes the loss of another. And, as worldly successes run in an opposite direction, mutual feelings are developed in the same way, and they become bitter, hateful and inimical. Material interests unite men in enterprises, and cause different countries and nations to approach each other. This is cheering, and, in a certain measure, causes the success of intelligence and labor. But the union of these interests is by no means the union of mankind. This requires something more—namely, the religion of love. What we think and do, actuated by this sentiment, does good to all and harm to none. Social life divides men; and this life, with all its circumstances considered in the light of love and union, reconciles them to each other. If cares and labor, sickness and pain, make you feel that you are a creature of earth, and perhaps worse than the brute or the senseless



plant, then step forward and feel yourself a citizen of a higher order of things. If the world rejects you, come and see your relationship; know yourself as a member of that great family of God which prays to him as our Heavenly Father."

Dr. Stern says a few words about the observation of the Sabbath which we cannot omit here: "The last day of the week, not the first one, should be devoted to rest; but we should not enjoy it until we have deserved it by our labor. The Sabbath-day does not *command* us to rest that we may interrupt our labor, but it *grants* it because we have finished our work; it does not demand rest as a *duty*, but gives it to us as a *gift*; it does not *forbid* labor because it is unholy and degrading, but it asks us to enjoy the fruit which we have earned. The Sabbath-day does not teach us to *flee from labor* in order to *enjoy* rest, but it teaches us to *work* so that we may *deserve* it, and to enjoy it in a proper way, so that it may strengthen us for fresh activity. The Sabbath does not command that rest which consists only of a cessation from work, but that rest which prompts us to higher spiritual activity; not that rest which makes us deny the duty of work, but that rest which awakens in us the duty of self-elevation.

"We cannot deny that the proper observation of the Sabbath does not consist in idleness which avoids the appearance of work, in order not to violate the duty of repose, and that it does not consist in the unceasing desire to exchange work for pleasure, which would impede our desire for self-elevation; but that the enjoyment of true and worthy pleasures cannot be a desecration of the Sabbath; and that joy, if it does not proceed from base sensuality, is an elevation of the human mind over the pressing



necessities of human life, and, therefore, a worthy observation of the Sabbath-day. We will observe the Sabbath, not as a burden which religion has forced upon us, but as a gift which she has granted to us; not as a deliverance from physical labor, but a deliverance from mental activity; not as a day of rest and indolence, but as a day of rest and improvement."

How many good and honorable people keep away now-a-days from the churches! For him who knows the high value of common worship and common prayer, this is a most deplorable circumstance. But what is the cause of it? Those false doctrines of Christian priests which, instead of teaching us what *Jesus* preached—love to God and to our fellow-creatures, which should be the constant and only text to their sermons—demand a blind belief in that which *men have taught about Jesus*; the blind belief in dogmas which are opposed to the eternal and unchangeable laws of nature,—dogmas which belong to a dark period, which are contradictory to reason, and which must be repulsive to every thinking and truly religious man.

Let us hope that the time will soon come when the churches will preach true religion, instead of incomprehensible and uncomprehended dogmas; and when mankind, now divided by different creeds, will be united in the worship of *one Supreme Being* and in love to their fellow-creatures. That will be the *true* religion and the *true* worship of God.

## BELIEF AND SCIENCE.

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Much has been said and written about the conflict between belief and science, and the incompatibility of these two factors of civilized life ; but they do not stand in opposition to each other, nor are they irreconcilable. Only the *false* belief, the belief in the supernatural and unnatural, is held in contempt by science. And, on the other hand, only *false* science rejects everything which it cannot conceive or understand. With its defective human senses, in its purely materialistic views, it despises all that is super-sensible ; consequently the belief in one Supreme Being.

It is foolish to consider true science as the enemy of belief,—not only foolish, but very culpable ; for we owe much to both science and religion. Whilst religion—not dogmatic faith, but the belief in one Supreme Being, which is in harmony with reason—gives warmth to our heart, and leads us to recognize our duty toward our fellow-men, science gives us and nourishes in us knowledge and experience, and enables us to fulfill our duty toward our fellow-creatures, to be useful to all mankind, and to promote our own happiness. Astronomy and natural science teach us to recognize the sublime, the real revelation of God. Anatomy teaches us the marvelous construction of our body, and its kindred sciences enable us to help our brethren in sickness. Chemistry, physical and mechanical sciences, assist us to ameliorate and bear the hardships and sufferings of life, or to acquire those worldly goods which make life comfortable.

Science is no enemy of religion ; but the Christian Church, which pretends to be the representative and supporter of religion, is opposed to science. Science is adverse only to that which is contradictory to reason ; it objects to the belief in miracles—to everything that is not in harmony with the eternal laws of nature.

The life of man has a double purpose—an ideal and a real. The ideal directs us, in the contemplation of the Supreme Being, to care for our moral improvement. The real points to outer and earthly relations ; and it is in this endeavor that science teaches us to use our powers, and to procure for ourselves enjoyment.

It cannot be denied that, among those who cultivate natural science, we find many an atheist. On the other hand, we find among the heroes of this noble science many a man of genuinely religious mind. As regards the first-named, the atheists, it is not the fault of science that they have lost their belief in God, but it is the human weakness of vanity. Such men, who have discovered and established some scientific facts and rendered important services, forget that their abilities do not come from themselves, but are the gift of a higher Being. They are led into the error that they know everything, that they have fathomed every depth—an error which is all the more incomprehensible, as every generation, every decennium, brings new discoveries and inventions, brilliant victories of science, which have never been thought of before.

We need not refute the imputation of a majority of Christian priests, that natural science leads to atheism. On the contrary, an exhaustive study of the world and the entire life of nature is better qualified than anything else to establish and confirm in us the belief in a Supreme

Being and a Supreme Reason, and to lead us out of a state of blind belief in established authorities to an independent and earnest conviction of our own. Men like Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Linnæus, Newton, the brothers Herschel, Bessel, Arago, Agassiz, Liebig, Faraday, and others, have given proof of this.

The study and the influence of natural science gain ground every year. It is not an enemy of religion, but is a determined opponent of all theological speculations and stories of miracles. Science is gradually making an end of this; and theology, which calls itself falsely a science, will soon take its place with astrology, magic and alchemy.\*

Ecclesiastical persecution of science is very old. It dates from the earliest centuries. The Church pretended to be the judge of everything relating to science and knowledge, and never hesitated to call upon the worldly powers to carry out its dictates. It became the stumbling-block in the way of progress, and retarded the development of Europe for centuries.

When Copernicus had written his great work, "*De Revolutionibus Orbium Cœlestium*," in which he proved that the sun was the centre of our system, the priests were such decided enemies of all innovations, that, through fear of excommunication, he kept his manuscript twelve years before he decided to publish it.

When Galileo decided in favor of the Copernican system, he was pressed so hard by the Church that he humiliated himself by a degrading abjuration of what he had declared as true. The Church maintained that what

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\* Theology is no science; for it is occupied only with the ideal, whilst science deals only with the real. Science is the province of knowledge; theology that of belief.

he had written was contrary to the word of God, and his "Dialogues" were publicly burnt in Rome. Seven cardinals signed the sentence of the Inquisition, and Luther also joined in the condemnation of Galileo's doctrines. These doctrines have long been accepted, and Galileo's name is honored as one of the highest in science.

When Buffon had published his history of the animal kingdom, the Theological Faculty of Paris informed him that several of his theories and principles were opposed to the spirit of the Church, and therefore condemnable. Buffon was compelled to declare that it was not his intention to contradict the Bible, and that he was ready to recall everything he had written that was opposed to the law of Moses.

In the beginning, Newton's principle of gravitation met with many opponents. He was accused of skepticism; and the priests maintained that the Old Testament contained a complete system of natural science.

In all times the priesthood has presumed to dictate to science what it should do, and what it should not do; what it should teach and not teach. It has always protested against the views and discoveries of the enlightened men of science. Their labors were always considered as twin brothers of the devil. Geographical, astronomical, and geological discoveries, wherever in conflict with the Church, have always been rejected and discredited.

When the learned Bishop Virgil, in the eighth century, declared himself in favor of the belief in the existence of the Antipodes, Pope Zacharias, who was indignant at such a doctrine, gave orders to his envoy to expel the bishop from the priesthood, and to drive him from the altar of his church.

The Franciscan monk Roger Bacon was an astronomer, and made many scientific discoveries. He was the inventor of the magnifying glass. He also exposed the immorality of the priests. He was violently persecuted. He was accused of having sold himself to the devil, of having entered into a compact with him; and his inventions were declared to be the work of hellish magic. Pope Nicholas III. prohibited him from teaching; and, after much tribulation and sorrow, he was placed in prison, in which he spent ten years, until the end of his life was approaching. On his deathbed he said, in a sorrowful tone: "I regret not that I have suffered so much in the interest of science. The ignorance of those with whom I had to deal prevented me from doing more."

The foundation of the Royal Society of England met with difficulties, because it was believed that scientific discoveries would be injurious to the Christian faith. The microscope and telescope were called atheistic discoveries.

Doctor Jenner's discovery of the benefits of vaccination was declared from the pulpits to be a devilish one, a tempting of Providence, and a detestable crime.

Harvey's theory of the circulation of the blood was for many years scornfully rejected.

Franklin's invention of the lightning-rod was considered sacrilege, and a crime against the will of God.

When Thomas Gray tried to prove the feasibility of working railroads, the *Edinburgh Review* declared that a strait-jacket would be best for him. And even Humphry Davy laughed at the idea that London could be lighted with gas.

Even our own days furnish many instances of intolerance and opposition to progress on the part of many church-people, who consider every conquest of science as an attack upon faith. Those men who first thought of connecting the Pacific with the Atlantic Ocean were asked if they were not afraid of the vengeance of heaven in attempting to improve what the Creator, in his power and wisdom, had made as it was. Not many years have passed since the sacrament was refused to those who reaped their harvest by means of machinery; and there are to this day people who refuse to insure their lives because they consider it a want of confidence in Divine Providence.

The priesthood takes its arguments from the Bible—a work which is not based upon abstract knowledge, but upon faith in authorities, and which, therefore, is not accessible to reason. Science does not *believe*: it *knows*, by study, that everything is based upon an infinitely wise plan; that creation has been developed, and is being developed, after unchangeable, established laws in uninterrupted sequence.

Huxley says, in one of his works: “Whilst the doctrines of heathenism, of Osiris and Zeus, have long been considered as fables, and whilst everybody would be ridiculed who would try to revive them, there are countless people who still believe in the phantasmagories of the old, uncivilized nations of Palestine, and which are related in the Bible by unknown and uncultivated writers. People who think themselves civilized consider these fables as facts, and as a standard by which to measure the correctness of scientific inquiry. The old Hebrew, half barbarous idea of creation lies, in this nineteenth century, like a nightmare on the threshold of science. Who can count



the men whose lives, from the time of Galileo until this day, have been embittered, whose good names have been tarnished by the blind zeal of the Bible-worshippers, on account of their earnest inquiry after truth? Who can count the number of weak men whose sense of truth has been destroyed by their endeavors to declare the impossible possible; whose life has been wasted in the attempt to put the fresh young wine of science into the old vessels of old Judaism, pushed on by the roaring of these same Bible-worshippers?"

As proof that religion and science are not opposed to each other, but, on the contrary, agree with each other, the following sayings of the heroes of science may be quoted:

Kepler says, in his work in which he deposited his immortal discoveries: "The wisdom of the Lord is as infinite as his glory and power. Praise thy Creator, O my soul! for all things are in him and by him. In him are contained all we know and all our vain knowledge. Praise, glory and honor be to him forever!"

When Copernicus communicated a new and important discovery, somebody made an objection which deserved attention, and asked him: "What do you reply to this?" "Nothing," answered Copernicus; "but God will give grace that a reply may be found." Afterward, Galileo discovered with the telescope that Copernicus was right.

Newton writes, in his principal work: "The Lord of heaven rules all things, not as the soul of the world, but as the ruler of the universe; for that reason we call him the only-ruling God."

Faraday, the scientist, says, in a letter of the 6th of November, 1863: "I think that also in earthly things

God's invisible being—namely, his eternal power and Godhead—can be recognized in his works, in the creation of the world.”

The chemist Liebig thought he had discovered that a certain exhaustion of the soil was constantly taking place which was not supplied in the natural course of events, but which chemistry had found the means of remedying. Afterward he declared: “When I had submitted all my theories to a new trial, I discovered the cause of my error: I had sinned against the wisdom of the Almighty. I thought, in my blindness, that there was a link missing in that wonderful chain of laws which determines and maintains the life on the surface of the earth forever, which I, miserable worm, fancied myself called upon to fill out. Good care was taken to supply it, and in such a miraculous manner that the bare possibility of such a law could not even be imagined by human reason.”

The botanist Linnæus writes, in his “System of Nature:” “I have observed animals relying for existence upon the vegetable world; the plants rooted in the soil; the earth, carried by the universe, traveling by unchangeable laws around the sun, which gives life to everything upon it; the sun at last turning on its own axis, with other solar systems, without limitation of space or number, supported by that inconceivable First Cause, that Being of beings, the Cause of all effects, the Architect, Preserver and Ruler of the Universe. Who calls this Being Ruler of the World is not mistaken, for everything depends upon him; who calls him Creator does not err, for everything has its origin in him; who calls him Providence is right, for the world proceeds in its progress according to his counsel. He sees everything, hears every-

thing, endows everything with life and soul. He is all in all. This Being, without whom nothing can exist, is eternal, immeasurable, not begotten nor created. In his sacred majesty he can be viewed by the spirit only. Carefully watching, I have seen this one infinite, all-knowing Being, and have been overwhelmed with astonishment. I have discovered traces of his steps in this created world, and in them, even in the smallest, which almost disappear before our senses, have discovered a fullness of power, wisdom and unfathomable perfection."

The naturalist Agassiz, in his great work on fishes, concludes his chapter on classification with the following words: "Do we not find here the revelation of a spirit which is as powerful as it is fertile?—the action of an intelligence which is as sublime as it is provident?—the traces of an infinite and wise Godhead?—the tangible proof of the existence of one God, the Creator of all things, the Ruler of the world and the Giver of all good? That, at least, is what I read in the works of creation."

Dr. Virchow, the celebrated medical scientist, delivered in 1879 a lecture on the subject, "Liberty and Science," and expressed himself as follows: "All attempts to change our problems into doctrines, and use our theories as a basis for a method of education, particularly the attempt to replace the dogmas of the Church by a religion based upon the doctrine of descent,—all these attempts, I say, must miscarry."

Dr. A. Jacobi delivered a lecture on Virchow in 1881, in which he says: "Virchow further maintains that belief has nothing to do with scientific inquiry, and religious controversy should find no place in scientific works.

More than thirty years ago Virchow wrote: 'It is impossible to judge belief on scientific principles, for belief and science have nothing in common. Not that one makes the other impossible, or the contrary; but, as far as science exists, belief is impossible: belief can begin only where science ceases. It cannot be denied that, where the limits are kept, belief can actually have realistic objects. It is the task of science not to attack the object of faith, but merely to determine the limits which cannot be reached by knowledge, and to establish within them a uniform self-consciousness.' "

Radenberg says, in the second volume of his "Isis:" "Faith and knowledge belong to each other. This does not mean that we should abandon faith and cultivate science only: both can be nurtured at the same time. Man need not be rude and uncultivated in order to believe; no more need he be an unbeliever to devote himself to science. We can be believers, and yet disciples of science; we can have at the same time belief for the higher, super-sensible life, knowledge for the lower, earthly existence."

Perthy says, in his "Views:" "Natural science is perfectly right when it demands for its domain the unlimited acknowledgment of its established laws. But this domain is only a part of the world, and its truths are not the whole truth. In the kingdom of the spirit there exist other conditions, which are not subject to the mechanical laws of the nature of senses, though they are by no means without law. The two are probably combined in a higher, unknown unity."

Darwin wrote to a student who had asked him for a solution of certain doubts which Darwin's doctrine had

aroused in him : “ Science and Christianity have nothing to do with each other, except, perhaps, that scientific inquiry makes us careful in accepting proofs. As for myself, I do not believe that a divine revelation has ever taken place. As regards belief in a future life, everybody must draw his conclusions from indefinite and contradictory possibilities.”

Following these expressions of opinion by scientific authorities referring to the relations between belief and science, we quote one coming from the opposite side—from a prominent member of the Christian Church, who, quite exceptionally, does not hold a position inimical to science. This distinguished member of the Church is no other than the present pope, Leo XIII. While Bishop of Perugia, he expressed himself on the relation of science to religion in a pastoral letter addressed to his diocese. Referring to the question whether the salvation of the soul should be the highest aim of man, he wrote : “ But it should not be said that the Church is opposed to science, to the study of natural sciences, to inquiries into the powers of nature, to the use which can be made of them for man’s purposes and the satisfaction of his wants. Can the Church desire anything more ardently than the glorification of God?—the knowledge of the sublime Master which is revealed in his works? If the universe is the book on every page of which the name and the wisdom of the Creator can be read and recognized, how lovingly should he worship it who fully and entirely devotes himself to the study of this book of creation! If two eyes suffice to recognize in the stars the glorification of the heavens; if two ears suffice to understand how day after day repeats the praise of the Highest and announces the mysteries of

his divine providence,—how much more deeply must he be convinced of the all-power and all-wisdom of the Deity, who with intelligent eyes looks up to the heavens and into the depths of the earth!—who finds a proof in an atom, in a plant, in the smallest branch, that the Supreme Spirit has determined everywhere measure and weight! And you wish that the Church should, on principle, attack such studies, or should view with cold indifference inquiries which bear such precious fruit! that it should obstinately insist upon keeping the book closed, so that nobody may read it!”

We have quoted above an expression of Darwin; and this leads us to Darwinism, which has created an intense sensation in the field of natural science. And not without reason; for Darwin has established a new theory of the creation of the animal world. The leading principle of this doctrine is, that all species of plants and animals are descended from a few primitive forms (vesicle), perhaps from one only, and that the following generations have been developed to more perfect forms. Darwin's mode of reasoning is as follows: First: Every generation differs from the preceding in trifling details, the cause of which may be recognized in differences in the conditions of origin and existence. Secondly: The tendency of inheritance exists not only in general, but in particular marks. Thirdly: Individuals which are most favorably organized for the conditions of existence, will be more easily preserved than others with which they are struggling for existence. And if these favoring qualities are inherited by their posterity, these will be able more and more to outlive their less favored relatives.



It has sometimes been asserted that Darwinism destroys the belief in one Supreme Being as the Creator of the world; but that is not the case. Above all, it must be kept in mind that Darwin's theory, however ingenious it may be, is not based upon established facts, but upon hypotheses; for nobody has ever *seen* the springing into existence of a man or an animal. No thoughtful man will take the biblical account of the Creation as an authentic statement; and no more should we attach the importance of an accomplished fact to Darwin's theories. Goethe also rejected the biblical account of the Creation. In his dialogues with Eckermann (Vol. II.), he says: "Men came into existence by the power of God, wherever the soil was favorable, probably first on high ground. It is perfectly reasonable to suppose that this happened; but to meditate upon how it happened is an unprofitable business, which we may leave to those who like to trouble themselves with unprofitable problems."

The manner in which the world and its creatures have come into existence has nothing to do with our belief in God, or our moral conduct. That the world, with all that is within it, has been created, and stands before us in all its beauty and glory, is certain. Whoever sees that a thing cannot come into being without creative wisdom and power, whoever sees more than mere accident in the wise laws which regulate the world, must accept the idea of a creator; and that is quite enough for us mortals. *How* it was created surpasses all human wisdom.

A modern writer, Alois Goedel, expresses himself about the Darwinian theory as follows: "If I could only see anywhere in this world a heap of primeval soil, vesicle, worm or ape, my reason would sooner leave me than im-



agine what the *human* spirit is, and *how it could descend from that*. But if I see everywhere in the world an infinite, eternal and perfectly free whole, I am convinced that primeval soil, vesicles, animal and human intelligence, signify only the wonderful, multifarious species of existence in which the whole universe is revealed to my limited consciousness as of divine origin."

Darwin is no opponent of religion. On the contrary, he expresses himself distinctly in favor of creation—*creation*, not *coming into existence*, and having existed *from eternity*. This supposes a something which must have existed before the world, and which has created the world. Only his followers pretend that he has omitted to draw the final conclusions of his theories, in order not to hurt the religious sensitiveness of his countrymen; and that he has expressed himself so cautiously for that reason only. But, thereby, they not only injure Darwin, but also his system, which in no manner favors the materialistic principle; on the contrary, it lends fresh support to the foundation of the belief in one Creator.

Darwin has found in the scientific world not only a number of adherents, but also many and weighty opponents. The celebrated scientist Lucal, as President of the Anthropological Congress held in Frankfort in 1882, pronounced himself as directly opposed to the Darwinian theory. Professor Virchow declared his complete accordance with Lucal, in the following words: "We confine ourselves to report, and to declare as truth, that which we can really prove. Let us remain in this narrow path; let us not be seduced by the siren songs of a poetical view of nature, even if it appears before us in the garb of philosophy. Let us continue to be empirics in the good

sense of the word. The greatest honor is due to the Anthropological Society, to which so many experienced searchers belong, not to be dazzled by Darwinism. I do not agree with Darwinism and its followers in those points in which they go beyond the limits of exact science and replace it by hypotheses. If they carried out their theories, they would be able to make pancakes without eggs or hens, produce bread without baking. Up to our day it has not yet been possible to produce out of inorganic matter even the smallest of living beings. There has never been a period in which the gravest problems have been treated in such a reckless and, I might say, foolish manner. Nobody has yet seen a man about entering into existence: he was already finished. The original man has yet to be found."

When, at the Congress of German naturalists at Munich, it was proposed to introduce Darwin's theory of the descent of man into the public schools, Virchow opposed the motion with these words: "Gentlemen, let us be temperate; let us practice resignation, by considering even the most precious problems which we discuss as problems only. Let us repeat again and again, Do not take these problems for established facts. On the contrary, be prepared to believe that they may be fallacious. For the present, we are only of opinion that it *might be* thus."

Virchow also produced no small impression, when, on the same occasion, he replied to a Mr. von Tiegel *that the old God was still living, and that the human soul could not be driven out of the world by levers and telescopes*. It is easy to say that the original vesicle, from which all organic life is descended, consists of minute parts, which are called "plastidules;" and these consist of carbonic matter, of hydrogen, nitrogen and oxygen; and each is

endowed with a distinct soul, the produce of which is the sum of the power of the chaotic atoms. As long as the qualities of these matters are not sufficiently determined that it can be conceived *how a soul can be created out of their union*, we cannot speak of it as a scientific truth, *but only as a problem*. The descent of man from the ape, or any other animal, is only a problem, as prehistoric discoveries have not produced a trace of the cranium of the prehistoric man. The intentional or unintentional confusion of problems with established truths brings danger to science, the dignity of which is imperiled, with that of the nation whose judgment is misled.

At the annual meeting of the Victoria Institute in London, in June, 1883, the celebrated paleontologist, Prof. Barrande, declared that in none of his investigations had he found any one fossil species develop into another. In fact, it would seem that no scientific man had yet discovered a link between man and ape, between fish and frog, or between the vertebrate and invertebrate animals; further, there was no evidence of any one species, fossil or other, losing its peculiar characteristics to acquire new ones belonging to other species; for instance, however similar the dog to the wolf, there was no connecting link; and among extinct species the same was the case: there was no gradual passage from one to another. Moreover, the first animals that existed on the earth were by no means to be considered as inferior or degraded. And Prof. Huxley, in his sixth lecture on the origin of species, says, with reference to one of Darwin's hypotheses: "You must understand that I mean that I accept it provisionally, in exactly the same way as I accept any other hypothesis. Men of science do not pledge themselves to

creeds ; they are bound by articles of no sort. There is not a single belief that it is not a bounden duty with them to hold with a light hand, and to part with cheerfully the moment it is really proved to be contrary to any fact, great or small. And if, in course of time, I see good reasons for such a proceeding, I shall have no hesitation in coming before you and pointing out any change in my opinion, without finding the slightest occasion to blush for so doing."

From several German universities opinions adverse to the Darwinian theory have been heard—from Giessen, by Professor Hofmann ; from Greifswald, by Professor Zoeckler ; from Marburg, by Professor Wigand.

Nobody who is not altogether without knowledge, unless he knowingly and intentionally ignores established facts, can have a moment's doubt about the innumerable, incalculable blessings which science has conferred upon mankind in all conditions of life. The fact alone that it is the enemy of ignorance, false belief and superstition, should secure it our highest esteem. It is the electric light which changes the darkness of night into broad daylight. But it is a great folly for science to attempt to rule over domains which do not belong to it, or to consider itself infallible, and demand that all its doctrines shall be received without question and as established dogmas. Experience, based upon facts, teaches us that many theories which science has proclaimed and established as correct, have been overthrown by later experiments and discoveries. Only ignorance and pride could induce us to think that we have exhausted science and reached infallibility. Science is constantly progressing and growing, so that what to-day is considered as absolutely certain,

may be overcome to-morrow. Karl Vogt, an authority of the highest rank, says: "Science can never be exhausted."

Whatever great results science has produced, it has still an immense field before it, and has to solve problems, many of which may never be solved. We know the law of gravitation, of the poles, and of their mutual relation of attraction and repulsion. We know the composition of light; we know its analysis by means of the spectrum; and we know a thousand other things which indefatigable inquiry has revealed in the field of natural science. But if we examine closely these scientific conquests, we find that they are only of external importance. Of the real life of nature, and the main conditions of all being and growing, we know nothing. We stand before a doubly-sealed book; and only the connection between cause and effect enables us to acquire an opinion, which does not justify us in setting it up as an established truth.

When science ventures upon the examination of bodies which possess life and soul, it comes to a standstill at once. Every student can observe in himself that science knows very little about the qualities and power of the human spirit—about the mutual relation between him and other living beings; and he is daily astonished and confused by new phenomena and observations. Science, in this department, is able to judge only in a very limited way on mere possibilities. We can explain very little about the spiritual life and its physical causes. The principal organ of our spiritual life, the brain, with its activity, is, even in our days, a shrouded mystery. Those representatives of science who consider the human spirit merely as the expression of the activity of the brain, and deny

everything which they cannot perceive with their bodily senses, and—with good reason—make war against Christian orthodoxy, have their own dogmatism, like the Christian theologians; only, with this difference—that their orthodoxy is diametrically opposed to the Christian dogmas. Might truth not lie between them? The brain may produce thought; yet the thought is something very different from the bodily organ by which it is produced.

That a change of matter takes place in the human body is an established fact; but physiology can tell very little about the process of this change, either in a healthy or a sick person. No more do we know how the vesicle of the brain produces thought, or the glands of the stomach produce gastric juice.

Science has partly discovered the composite parts of the earth, and will undoubtedly make still further discoveries; but how it has come into existence will never become positively clear, for that is hidden in the mystery of eternity.

We know that our muscles are set to work by our will, for we experience it every moment; but *how* our will is capable of producing this effect has not been discovered. We know that the smallest seed produces the giant tree; but *how* it happens has never been discovered.

Do we understand the whole of the life of plants? We can dissect them. We know that they consist of vessels, partitions and manifold organs, and that a circulation of sap or juice takes place. But why all this occurs in that particular manner; how stem, leaves, blossoms and fruit are produced; how such colors, such forms, such qualities, are brought forth; and how just this peculiar, individual



life is active within,—we are not able to explain. Who can explain satisfactorily its growth? Who has looked into the inner, secret working of that active life in the vegetable kingdom? Our eyes, even when artificially assisted, can do nothing more. They see that the seed grows and germinates; that the germ develops into the blade; that the blade, by increase, builds up story upon story, and culminates in the ear; that the ear blossoms and is filled with grain. All this can be seen with the eye; but the *how*, the actual working life, the power which, producing and increasing with the matter, moves and works in the innermost part, has not been seen by the human eye, has not been discovered by the naturalist. We stand in astonishment upon the harvest-field. And how our admiration increases when we step out of the world of sheaves into that of shrubs, herbs, vines, fruits, flowers and trees,—if we stand meditating in the vegetable world and look upon all the children of nature!

Do we understand fully and without reserve any event which occurs in nature? We lift up a stone: we let it fall. Can we explain that? It is the law of gravitation, we are told. Very well; that is the name given, in this instance, to the cause. But is this designation, this name which we give to the process, an explanation? What is gravitation? Why does it exist? Can we explain it? No. We must accept it as an existing fact. It is there, and that must suffice. The magnet has the power of attracting iron. In what consists this power, and how is it produced? We do not know. We only judge, from its effect upon the iron, that it exists. Thus it is with other powers of nature. *No created being enters into the sanctuary of nature.*



By chemistry, science is enabled to separate and combine the different elements of matter; but it cannot develop the elements into higher forms of life.

It is often said that science teaches us to rule nature. That is untrue. Man can never rule nature; but science teaches and enables man to make the powers of nature serviceable to him.

But the representatives of science should not forget that all our knowledge is piecework, and that, as Hamlet says, "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy." Science should not be influenced by the Church, but should remember that there is a sphere which is beyond science and the knowledge of things which are perceptible to our *senses*,—a barrier which separates that which is natural and conceivable from that which is super-sensible, which cannot be determined by our senses.

Among the representatives of science there are those who deny everything that they cannot perceive with their human senses, which they cannot fathom. The gift of second-sight, the clairvoyance of somnambulism, presentiments and prophetic dreams, the apprehension of something unknown, spiritual effects at a distance, the knowledge of others' thoughts, and other phases of the soul, although they have been proved in a thousand instances, and have been experienced by reliable and trustworthy men, are considered by them as hallucination, fancy, deceit and fraud. Such men only acknowledge as really existing that which they can dissect with the scalpel or chemically analyze. To them the world is nothing but a mechanical structure, without spiritual life; and they forget that in the chain of the universal life there are still

many missing links. This pharisaical skepticism, which denies everything without inquiry, is as dangerous as the blind credulity which accepts everything without question or reflection. The former, indeed, is only a kind of ignorance which assumes the mask of intellectual fullness.

Beyond those things which can be weighed, measured, recognized and explained by human inquiry, there are other powers, which are inaccessible to science, the existence of which can be proved only by observation with the spiritual eye, by a view into our own soul. These are neither unnatural nor supernatural phenomena. There is no room for such phenomena in the whole universe, where everything is natural. But there are super-sensible phenomena—that is to say, things which we cannot see by our earthly senses, and which we cannot understand through our earthly conceptions. To these belong those incidents in the life of our soul which we have mentioned above. Distinct and well-proven indications about such phenomena have been made by men like Ennemoser and other contemporaries of Koerner. They should not be placed by the side of the twaddle of ignorant old women. Even when Kant speaks of things belonging to the domain of presentiment; and when Lessing, speaking of a ghost story which caused a great sensation in his day, said, “Here we are at the end of our tether,” it is easy enough to laugh; but it is impossible for unprejudiced and thoughtful people to reject the thought that we are standing on the borders of a sphere which exists, all the same, although we cannot discover it with our present knowledge of nature. Even Schopenhauer has recognized the existence of these spheres; and the attacks which have been made upon the great philosopher cannot detract from the

weight of his opinion: "To deny the existence of these things is not absence of prejudice, it is ignorance." In the wide circle of popular life lives a conviction that there is an inexplicable relation between man and a surrounding, super-sensible world. It has been recognized by representatives of science, by Zechner and the younger Fichte, that a bridge is to be spanned between our knowledge of nature and something which lies beyond it.

Science must divest itself of its skeptical pride, and not reject everything as a fable which it cannot understand and explain by intellectual research. It must take account of those facts to which numerous instances and all ages have borne witness—that there is a spiritual life of man, the higher destiny of which by its freedom and splendor transcends material limits; and, notwithstanding the doubts and darkness of the senses, it remains, it endures, and, by thousandfold-repeated revelations, makes itself felt in the human heart.

Representatives of science who consider themselves infallible, who reject everything as fraud and deception that surpasses their *senses*, are like those Roman priests who, two and a half centuries ago, persecuted Galileo on account of his assertion that the earth revolved around the sun, because they did not understand what was clear to his mind. The same will happen to those shortsighted people who, in their self-conceit, reject everything which *they* do not understand; and the words of Galileo, "And yet she moves," will be applied to them. If these people had not only studied the body of man and its functions, and the outer world, but also inquired seriously and exhaustively into the life of man's soul, they would not pass

judgment so recklessly and insultingly upon the phases of soul-life.

It has sometimes been supposed that science, particularly natural science, could and would supplant religion. That is a great error, and would prove to be a great misfortune for mankind.

Science proceeds from intellect, religion from reason and the soul. Every one of these functions of human life has its rights, which must not be obliterated or impaired, lest the whole human race perish. Science, which deals with purely material, chemical and physical necessities, cannot supply man with that which heart and reason demand, and what he seeks in religion—namely, love, confidence, comfort, reconciliation and liberty. Can geology teach him to do right, or anthropology to love his neighbor? Can chemistry and physical science induce him to conquer selfishness? Can biology inspire him with the sense of friendship? Science, alone, leaves the heart barren, and leads to an all-destroying selfishness, to complete heartlessness, if not to hatred of all mankind.

Every thinker must admit that all recent conquests of science, all results of inquiry, are not able to shake the belief in one Supreme Being. On the contrary, they have served the majority of mankind to enlarge this idea, to perfect and purify it, and to change belief into conviction. With a few scientific phrases, it is easy to lead an uneducated or half-educated man searching for enlightenment to the belief that there is no God, because the idea of God has been darkened in him by his faith in the Church. But the more his knowledge is enlarged, the more he is enabled to rectify his ideas about a Supreme Being and clear them of all human encumbrance, the more difficult

it will be to convert him to atheism. In a people, the annihilation of belief in God would be the same as the extermination of all higher emotions and views, of all feeling of justice and morality; for in the idea of one God is united all that distinguishes man from the beast—namely, law, order, truthfulness, justice, kindness and love.

*Religion and science are not opposed to each other. They are the founders of the welfare of mankind, and fellow-workers. Both pursue the same task—to enlighten men, to make them better and happier.*

## THE OPPONENTS OF RELIGION.

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The indifference to religion which prevails at present, among the most educated as well as among the most uneducated classes, has its cause partly in the Christian dogmas, which by their irrationality repulse men, partly in the erroneous doctrines of materialism and similar teachings, the promoters of which are continually striving to gain acknowledgment and propagation of their philosophy. This is the consequence of the old ecclesiastical doctrine: Thoushalt not think, but believe. And this new doctrine is accepted, as was formerly the blind belief of the Church.

Let us first turn to *materialism*.

Materialism is that doctrine according to which matter and all that is of bodily substance, all existence that can be perceived by the outward sense, is considered as the base of all life, from which also all spiritual phenomena are derived.

Spiritual life is considered entirely as a chain of functions and activities of the organic body. Irrespective of those uneducated and half-educated people who welcome materialism as the opponent of religion, the new doctrine has also found many followers among the educated, particularly among physiologists and physicians, who think that they have found in it the clue to physiological phenomena and spiritual life, which they now think they can explain according to purely scientific doctrines. But the more experiments have been made to subject the life of

the soul—that is to say, feeling and thought—to the laws of physical science, the more decidedly it has been proved that physical science is not, in this respect, sufficient to establish satisfactory results. Certain actions of the soul take place which can be as clearly perceived as a physical act, but cannot be subjected to material laws, being dependent upon physical experience.

This kind of materialism, which is not improperly called Scientific Materialism, because it is occupied with the experiment of human nature, is opposed by ordinary materialism, which is merely the slave of sensualism. This materialism denies God, and the spiritual life of man as an independent intellectual power. It maintains that the universe has come into existence by itself, and is constantly undergoing changes by a constant inward power. In its eyes the whole universe is a great machine which blindly and purposelessly moves according to an outward necessity. It considers the human mind as the product of organic matter, and maintains that thought, sentiment and will-power are produced by the same matter, without man being able to perform any independent action. He who is good, kind, sensible and righteous, is so only because the constitution of his body compels him to be so. It is no merit of his own. And he who harbors evil thoughts, leads an ungodly life, lies, steals and murders, is not responsible for his actions, because the organization of his body is the cause of them.

The brain is that part of the human body which, according to the doctrines of materialism, is the seat of thought, sentiment and will-power. This organ may be destroyed or dissolved without the spirit which used it as a tool sharing its fate.



The assertion of materialism that the human spirit is nothing but the result of the activity of the brain, is contradicted by those cases, of not uncommon occurrence, where men for years have carried balls in their brain, or been injured in some other way in a portion of it, without losing the active functions of their mind. The annals of medicine relate many instances (also Schubert, in his "History of the Soul") where men were ill for many years, and, at an examination of their bodies after their death, it was found that their brain had shrunk down to a minimum, perhaps to one-third of its original substance, or had been changed into a dry, sinewy mass, whilst their mental activity had been a normal one until the hour of their death. Hufeland, in his *Journal of Practical Medicine*, of October, 1823, gives an account of the following striking instance: "The sister of a man who was lying on his sick-bed went, the day before his death, to church, and told him that she was going to Mass. This was Good Friday. 'You mean to Communion,' he replied, 'for there is no Mass to day.'" In order to distinguish and speak so decidedly, the man must have had consciousness and memory. At the medical examination which took place after his death, *not a trace of brain* could be found. *The skull was perfectly hollow, like a box, and only a small quantity of fluid was found at the bottom.*

Darwin and others relate instances of injuries to the brain, where men for many months have existed in a perfectly unconscious state, and have recovered with fresh intellectual powers. Such cases would be impossible, if mental activity depended upon physical circumstances, or upon certain parts of the human body.

Physiologists have not agreed on the question: Which part of the human body is the dwelling-place of the soul?

Descartes has placed the abode of the soul in a certain gland of the brain; since then, other portions of the brain, and, finally, the water, or rather ether (Hagen), of the cavity of the brain have been considered to contain the soul.

Cases where people with injured, diminished, or completely vanished brains have lived until their death in the full possession of their mental powers, furnish a proof that the idea that the human spirit is dependent upon the activity of the brain is an erroneous one. The assertion that men with a smaller substance of brain are possessed of less mental power than those of a larger brain, has been proved to be erroneous. Professor Bruehl, of Vienna, in his work on the brain of vertebrates, in which he also treats on the subject of women's brains, and the erroneous assumption that their brain is lighter than that of men, proves, by careful experiment and the anatomy of the brain, that the brain of many a celebrated scientist had a smaller surface and weighed less than that of some obscure woman; that, indeed, all estimates of weight and surface which had hitherto been published were false; and that if they were correct, the power of the human mind could in no way be determined on this basis; and that in this respect science stood before an unsolved problem.

Frederick Muench says: "The self-conscious and thinking power of man is the spiritual force. The organization of the body which consists of matter that can be conceived by the senses—namely, the brain, which consists of albumen, fat, phosphorus and water, and is continually

fed by the circulation of the blood—cannot by itself produce mental activity. It is at most only its tool and outward shell. Mental power seems to be connected with something superior, which does not belong to earth, but to the universe—some spiritual formation within a bodily shell. In this matter effects become possible which cannot be explained by the union of albumen, fat, phosphorus and water.”

The organization of the most superior animals is very little different from that of the human body as regards the quality of flesh, blood and general structure. The ape approaches nearest in form to man; and, also, the physical qualities are almost the same—intelligence, cunning, reflection, love, hatred, revenge, wrath, attachment, faithfulness, malice, shrewdness, fear, anxiety, rage and courage. The functions of the animal body are very much the same as those of man—waking and sleeping, eating and drinking, evacuation and copulation. But it is not the body which constitutes the man, but the spirit which inhabits it. A higher power than that of the soul, the spirit, makes man a superior being and elevates him above the world of animals. And it is this spirit, which does not depend upon the body nor perish with it, that places man above the animal, which follows only natural instincts and has no mental faculties.

Oersted, in his work, “The Spirit of Nature,” says: “The spiritual power is the creative power; the body would cease to exist if the creative activity of the spirit could ever cease. The basis of existence is not to be sought in bodily matter. Matter has no existence by itself, but is dead. Nature is not of bodily quality alone, but is penetrated by the spirit.”

The naturalist Schleiden, in his work, "Plants and Their Life," says: "In the very depths of his mind, man feels that he does not belong to this world of bodies which surround him, but that his home is a world of independent, living spirits." In another place he says: "The aim of natural science should be to place the spirit in its proper place, independent of nature, and to elevate it to a religious presentiment of the existence of a Supreme Being."

N. Hartmann, in his work on materialism, says: "In a world where intellectual and moral power does not rule supreme, but unconscious powers of nature reign, the affairs of life cannot come into existence by means of lawless materialism and physical forces, but only by accidental coincidences of favorable circumstances. In such a world there can be no idea of the nobler motives of human thought and activity, of religion, virtue and morality; they may, at the best, be considered as harmless, insignificant enthusiasm. And the secretions of the brain, from which, according to the doctrines of materialism, thought proceeds, can be of value only as far as they produce cleverness, cunning and shrewdness."

Materialism is the most decided and direct opponent of idealism, which beautifies life in all its effects. Idealism seeks to elevate and improve public and private life; materialism works in the opposite direction, as it subjects the spiritual life to the physical, and teaches that, with the death of the body, the human spirit will cease to exist.

Materialism considers only the surface of things; it closes its eyes to the functions of the all-ruling spirit; yet it believes that its views are the only infallible ones. The materialists do not care for the future; they say: "All

your talk of moral destiny, of responsibility and freedom of will, is an idle, continual self-deception. Enjoy your brief life as best you can, and then return into nothing, without leaving a trace, like the other animals which have not the advantage of spirit."

These materialistic views are so cold, so unprofitable, so depressing, so injurious to the heart and mind in their consequences, that they cannot bear the criticism of sound reason.

No doubt there are materialists who in practical life preserve warmth of sentiment and love for the good. But these are exceptions; and, as a rule, they carry their cold, calculating reasoning into practice. Every view of life is the result of habit and education. If you wish to educate a young man to the doctrine of materialism, you should be consistent, and banish from his education everything of a religious or ideal nature. The heart certainly would perish; the source of all that is beautiful and great in the human breast would dry up, and the intellect would come to the conviction that there is nothing in this world but power and matter. By this system we should educate a theoretical materialist; and it would be a miracle if such a man carried into practical life what we call heart and soul.

Materialism is absolutely sterile. It has made a great noise, but has gained no result, simply because it is wanting in the ideal. It has produced no great idea, no great action. It has produced nothing of consequence. Materialism smothers all nobler feelings in the heart of men, and prevents all rising to a superior state. But wherever we look into nature, we see that everything that is great and sublime has not been originated by materialism, but by ideal enthusiasm. It is not narrow reason which pro-

duces that which endures, but it is genius, the ideal, divine spark in the human soul.

Oettingen says, in his "Statistics of Morals," "A natural consequence of the philosophy of materialism is the inordinate desire for enjoyment. Hundreds of thousands wish to enjoy, and thousands of others speculate upon this desire for enjoyment. The thirst for desire becomes more violent as it is satisfied. Luxury and dissipation have led criminals of the most different kinds into prison. Materialism has destroyed in them every belief in something superior; it has taken away from them the power of resignation, and has made the step toward crime easier to them than the return to the right path."

Frederick Muench says: "The steadily increasing desire for enjoyment, which, by the side of the effrontery of vice and inward depravity, hides itself under the cloak of hypocrisy; the neglect of the most sacred duties in domestic and public life; the insatiable greed for money, which shrinks from no means of obtaining it; private and public frauds; deeds of the most brutal violence, and, finally, the end of a degraded life by a ball from a pistol,—all these are the natural consequences of a doctrine which drags man down to the level of a brute beast."

In every phase of life we see the fruits of this false philosophy—as, for instance, in the degradation of public opinion, in political, social, commercial, and all other circumstances. The most miserable egotism and shameless cunning walk hand in hand to gather their prey; always ready to treat the law with contempt, because the inner, moral laws cause no scruple within them: they have been obliterated by the false doctrines of materialism. Mere instinct teaches them to care for themselves



only as far as possible until their despicable life has come to an end. What a blasphemy against God and man are such a life, such a system, and such an end !

But the progress and happiness of mankind consist, not in brutal realism and desire of enjoyment, but in the ideal striving after the good. And this ideal desire persists to this day in by far the larger majority of mankind. It is sometimes suppressed in the turmoil of everyday life ; but it always comes to life again, and a beautiful, rich harmony is the result. In resignation of all selfishness, and in love, we find the redemption of mankind from triviality, baseness, and the stupefying effects of materialism.

That our century is called the century of enlightenment must fill every thinking man with joy. But, unfortunately, this enlightenment is not always true and genuine ; and it is certain that the idea of enlightenment is not clearly comprehended by a great number of people, and is looked for in circumstances and doctrines which do not serve to enlighten, but which only replace a new authority in place of the rejected authority of the Church. It is only the uneducated and the half-educated who blindly accept the doctrines of materialism, and boast of this fact to be considered as liberal-minded men. The desire for enlightenment which characterizes our century is frequently inclined to throw away every belief, even the most natural, and to deny everything which does not fit into the system which has been established by the representatives of materialism. In some instances, so-called enlightenment assumes a mask as false as that which Christianity puts on when it desires to represent itself as the benefactor of mankind. Thus the world groans between the tyranny of the priesthood and a false enlightenment which has for an



aim only the culture of the intellect, and neglects to care for the life of the spirit ; and which, on account of perfectly justified aversion to Christianity, also rejects the religious aspirations of mankind. Many a one, from hatred of ecclesiasticism, has fallen a victim to the brutal force of material enjoyment ; others again, from fear of this materialism, which denies every moral law, have taken shelter in the arms of the Church and under the authority of the priesthood, who, instead of educating men for this life, prepare them for the future life, which is to be in "heaven."

When the Church dogmas declare this life to be a vale of tears, the abode of care and sorrow, for which men will be rewarded in "heaven," they are as false, and cause as much mischief as materialism, which declares the enjoyments of this life to be the sole and entire purpose of their existence. This earth is not a vale of tears: it depends alone upon men whether they will make it one. The earth is a paradise in which every happiness attends us, if we know how to make this paradise. First of all, we should lead a righteous and godly life ; we should not renounce the joys of this earth, like monks, and pass our lives in gloomy brooding, but we should enjoy deeply and with gratitude the numerous cheering and moral pleasures with which the Creator of the world has blessed our earth. The doctrine that we should renounce all earthly pleasures is condemnable, because it opposes the will of God, who has given us the enjoyments of this world to make use of them. This doctrine produces either church-enthusiasts or hypocrites, and drives men into the arms of materialism. The effects of this can be easily perceived from John Huber's work, "The Ethical Question." He gives an

extract from the diary of a materialist, R. Schurichts: "Enjoyment, intoxication, love, are good, and so is hatred, for it is the equivalent where we can find no love. Possession is good, because it can be transformed into enjoyment. Power is good, because it satisfies our pride. Truth is good so long as it gives us pleasure; lying, perjury, hypocrisy and flattery are good, if they bring us advantages. Faithfulness is good so long as it is rewarded; treachery is good when it brings a higher price than faith. Marriage is good so long as it makes us happy, and adultery is good when marriage begins to be wearisome, or to him who loves a married person. Fraud, theft, robbery and murder are good, if they lead to wealth and enjoyment. Vengeance is good when it satisfies our self-respect. Life is good so long as it is an enigma; but suicide is good when it solves this enigma."

Surely, these are principles which must fill our hearts with horror.

What else is left to man when, in consequence of his materialistic views, he knows no moral law besides himself, and makes his own selfishness the measure of his actions? If there is no longer the guiding influence of the Supreme Being in our hearts, we lose our conscience, the distinction between good and evil is obliterated, all moral responsibility ceases, and our conduct is guided only by the personal advantages which it produces. Selfishness has been, and always will be, the mainspring of all the actions of the materialist.

The root of all materialistic evil, as well as that of all anti-religious movements, is found, in the first instance, in the Christian dogmas, which are opposed to reason, and in the circumstance that men throw away religion

with them at the same time; also in the indecision which is connected with half-education and half-culture; and it is self-evident that materialism is the main cause of the universal, visible, and constantly increasing misery.

It is beyond all dispute that the increasing proportion of suicides arises mainly from the doctrines of materialism and other kindred doctrines which deny the existence of a Supreme Being, and which consider the human spirit as the result of the material substance of the brain, which comes to an end with the life of man. He who believes in a Supreme Being can never despair, no matter what hard fate may befall him. And if immortality is not merely an illusion of the brain, we must say to ourselves that he cannot lose with his life that which has tormented and troubled him; for the suicide commits that ruthless deed in order to destroy within him that which thinks—namely, his spirit.

Among the opponents of religion, atheism comes next to materialism; but, between these two, some other denominations are to be taken into consideration, the followers of which do not absolutely deny the existence of a Supreme Being, nor yet recognize it. These are pantheism and agnosticism, which latter has made its appearance only in recent years.

*Pantheism* teaches that there is no Supreme Being existing outside and above the world, but a Spirit which is one and the same with the world, which penetrates it, and through the existence of which conditions and changes are revealed to us, in the rushing brook as well as in the flower, and also in the stars of the firmament; which also dwells within man, and makes of every man a part of the Godhead. In this manner pantheism is really a worship

of the world and nature, which were originally the basis of heathen philosophy, when men, fettered in the chains of the senses, thought they saw the Godhead in the rising sun, and worshiped it. Pantheism identifies and mingles the creature with the creator, the sensual with the hyper-sensual, appearance with reality; and the pantheist, thinking himself a part of the Godhead, must necessarily find it impossible to address the Supreme Being in prayer, because he would then pray to himself.

Supposing the pantheistic doctrine to be correct, how can we explain sin which is committed by men? God cannot sin; but if the sinful man were a part of the Godhead, God would sin.

But man is not God, and cannot be a part of God. He must recognize something that is superior to himself; he must submit himself to God. Man may ignore this from carelessness or pride, but, at last, knowledge will come to him. This knowledge generally comes with important and deeply affecting events of his life.

*Agnosticism* is a new philosophy, which has appeared only in recent times. It is related to atheism. It does not positively deny the existence of a Supreme Being, but takes good care not even to indicate it. The word *agnosticism* means not-knowing; and the agnostic maintains that he is wanting in the faculty of understanding and believing in certain religious truths. His reply to the question whether there is a Supreme Being is a simple one: "I do not know." In the same evasive manner he will reply to the question relating to immortality. The agnostic thinks that he may rely on his own morality, in every instance in life, without God and without looking upward to the Supreme Being.

Agnosticism is an extreme feature of the superficial rationalism which lacks every religious support and every scientific basis, which destroys without the power of reconstructing, and which, because it is wanting in the ideal sense, cannot satisfy the longing after the ideal which dwells in every human soul.

The agnostic does not maintain, like the atheist and the materialist, that his philosophy has entirely solved the enigma of life, for which the Christian seeks a solution in revelation; he acknowledges that his knowledge is only piecework, and he meets the theories and dogmas of the Church with respectful reserve. He gives no proof of the courage of conviction and faith.

We come now to a consideration of *atheism*.

Every phenomenon is preceded, and must be preceded, by causes; and such a determinate cause exists also to explain the appearance of atheism, which denies a Supreme Being. This cause is not to be found in the heart of man; for that is attracted toward the Source of life, to the visible and invisible Author of creation, and, without an outward cause, would never deny the existence of a Supreme Being. This outer cause is the same which has given birth to materialism—namely, Christianity, which has tried to intrude upon man its dogmas, which are contradictory to reason. Instead of attacking the dogmas only, atheists threw away the belief in God with that of Christianity, and inscribed irreligion and godlessness upon their standard. Atheism is the offspring of overbearing criticism; and where, with importunate self-consciousness, it has entered into publicity, it has generally proved to be the result of half-education and ignorance.

The so-called upper classes of the eighteenth century made it a boast not to believe anything that could not be mathematically proved or perceived by the senses. They fancied themselves to have made immense progress when they either denied the existence of an invisible world or immortality altogether, or considered them of no importance. They delighted in a certain kind of skepticism, the substance of which was biting wit or sharp dialectics.

In his work on Christianity, Radenhausen writes of the appearance of atheism as follows: "The rage of blind persecution which existed through many centuries, made Christianity one of the most bloodthirsty religions of the world. It was not until the eighteenth century that men of superior education freed themselves completely from the belief in the devil. But they did not know how to get rid of evil; and that is the reason that men who had been shaken in their ideas about the government of the world, abandoned also the belief in a Supreme Being and became atheists, of which there were so many, two hundred years ago, that it was considered distinctive of a thinking man not to believe in God. We may connect this change with the immorality of those days, but in an inverse ratio; for the contempt of all law, human and divine, had preceded it; and, as immorality was the distinguishing mark of the upper classes, atheism prevailed in the most shameless and barefaced manner, and the belief of the people was ruthlessly scorned and laughed at."

Almost all atheistic tendencies which we meet in science and in life can be traced to the Christian dogmas in the first place, and then to the common first sentiment of all men—that so many things in this world are in apparent contradiction, at least to that which we think ourselves



entitled to expect from Providence. Atheism tries to prove that, because certain conditions in the world do not agree with our views, there is nothing perfect in this world, which ought to be perfect if a God created it. Let us draw a parallel between things human and things created: Has a watch or a locomotive, which corresponds to our expectations, but which, in many respects, is capable of improvement—has it come into existence by an accident, or is it not the work of an intelligent mind? And if we see in the work of a great artist something the object of which we do not at once comprehend, should we not rather suppose that we are incapable of entering into his intentions, than consider the otherwise faultless production as the work of an inexperienced beginner? And how much more should we consider the limits of our own reason in contemplating the wonderfully regulated household of nature and of the universe, which we know only partially!

Yet considerations of this kind are ridiculed by atheists. One of the heroes of atheism, in a lecture which he delivered in 1874, disputed the existence of God, for the reason that, in his opinion, the world was not at all ruled in a satisfactory manner, and that many contradictions were visible in nature. Among these, he criticised the size of the sun, which he considered disproportionately large; that if it were smaller it would correspond better with the planetary system; that the planets were not placed in systematic order; that the human body had eyes only in front, and not in the back; that man could only walk, and not fly. Indeed, it is very much to be regretted that this gentleman was not present at the creation of the world. Everything would have been done in a



much more satisfactory manner : we should be able to fly, and should have eyes in the back of our heads.

In contrast to such bombast, and with reference to the charges of atheism made against him by the clergy, Professor Tyndall, in a lecture delivered in Manchester, in October, 1874, said : " I have noticed, during years of self-observation, that it is not in hours of clearness and vigor that this doctrine commends itself to my mind ; that in the presence of stronger and healthier thought it ever dissolves and disappears, as offering no solution of the mystery in which we dwell, and of which we form a part. Often in the springtime, when looking with delight on the sprouting foliage, considering the lilies of the field, and sharing the general joy of opening life, I have asked myself whether there is no power, being, or thing, in the universe whose knowledge of that of which I am so ignorant is greater than mine. I have said to myself : Can man's knowledge be the greatest knowledge, and man's life be the highest life ? My friends, the profession of that atheism with which I am sometimes so lightly charged would, in my case, be an impossible answer to this question,—only slightly preferable to that fierce and distorted theism which still reigns rampant in some minds as the survival of a more ferocious age. But, quitting the more grotesque forms of the theological, I already see, emerging from recent discussions, that wonderful plasticity of the theistic idea which enables it to maintain, through many changes, its hold upon superior minds."

If we draw a comparison between religion and atheism, we generally find the following result : Religion endows us with pleasure and courage ; it teaches us modesty and moderation in prosperity, and comfort and relief in the

time of trouble. It follows us, creating and spreading blessings from the cradle to the grave, and beautifies our last hours with cheering hope. Atheism, on the contrary, which considers conscience a prejudice, piety an illusion, justice an error, and selfishness as the criterion of our actions, makes man proud and overbearing when in prosperity, leaves him helplessly exposed to the storms of passions and affections, makes him depressed and discouraged in misfortune, and leaves him to despair. His heart is a waste and desolation. He looks without hope and comfort into the future, unless, in the moment of danger and approaching misfortune, all the sophistry of his reason disappears like a shadow, and the thought of God and of divine help arises from the depths of his heart and brings comfort and salvation.

There are many people who are atheists, or think they are, without being acquainted with the principles of atheism. We meet with such people at all times. They are driven along with the current of their surroundings in the same way as the followers of the Church, and imagine that they are liberal-minded people. Experience teaches us, to our sorrow, that no system, however foolish, has not found its followers; indeed, the more senseless and irrational certain doctrines may be, if they only appeal to the selfishness and passions of the masses, the more willing followers they will find. These half-educated people, who are quite incapable of forming an opinion on matters of abstract knowledge, pretend to understand everything, and do not hesitate to express the most absurd ideas.

The popularizing of natural science has no doubt contributed in modern times to the spreading of atheism. We do not wish to attach any blame to this movement;

on the contrary, it is deserving of the praise and support of all who can contribute to it, because it is an element which furthers education and, consequently, civilization. The mischief is this—that many readers, even among the educated classes, are not yet ripe for the study of natural science, even in its popularized form. They do not yet comprehend what they have read, but consider themselves as full of knowledge as the scholar who has worked for many years to obtain those results which, in a popular form, he presents to those of the people who are in want of education.

The atheist, who does not believe in Providence, in a regulated government of the world, must look upon everything that happens as an accident, a blind accident. But accident is the reverse of regular and natural order. Whence comes this order, the influence of which we feel in the greatest as well as in the smallest; which we observe in the whole universe, in the structure and life of the smallest animal, which is not visible to the naked eye; in the fruits of the field, in the trees of the forest, in the movement of the world of stars? Is that not a great and irrefutable proof of the existence and working of an eternal and sublime spirit?

You say everything is chance. Look into the structure which stands before your eyes. The single stone could not know of what use it was to be; but the architect who uses it knows. Look at the horses before the carriage. They run along without knowing what is the object of their work, but he who makes them run, who feeds them and conducts them, knows their destination. And if man is able to rule and conduct that which is lifeless or without reason, and knows how to take advantage of every useful

idea, so an almighty Spirit leads us men, influences our fate, and unconsciously we assist in furthering his sublime purposes. We are *compelled* to further them.

Accident is a strange word, and is often used in a very thoughtless and irrational manner. The God who rules our destiny knows of no accident. And our life, composed of thousands of presumed accidents which are intimately connected with each other, forms one strong chain of which not one link can be spared. Look around, look at the present time, and many a circumstance appears to you as an accident. Look back into your past life, and see if a single one of those so-called accidents was unnecessary *to lead you where you stand now*. Not one. They were all links of *one* chain. Many a man who has sunk low may say to himself: "I have not always been so wicked; I became so because I lost the belief in God and Providence, and in everything that is good in this world. I became weak, and was not able to fight against experience and ill-fortune; I lost the sentiment of right and wrong; I became wicked because it seemed more easy and more comfortable to take the path of selfishness than to remain in the path of righteousness and good works." How many have arrived at such a crisis! The cause of this is principally to be found in the fact that religiousness necessitates certain moral obligations, which these people would like to avoid, in order to follow their passions and selfish inclinations—the natural effect of a natural cause. The more irreligious a man is, the more he will lose the strength to withstand temptation; for he has lost the inner support which strengthens us to do good.

He who expects to find freedom in his renunciation of God, becomes the slave of a selfishness which tears asunder

all bonds of love and justice uniting us with our fellow-man, and which destroys even the happiest family ties. Many a one who has walked on this downward path has lost all joy and happiness. He had no idea whither the road on which he had entered would lead him. If we could look into the hearts of suicides, we should find that all who have ended their lives by this crime had lost confidence and belief in God and in Divine Providence.

To take away the belief in God and immortality from man means to deprive him of all joys of life, to destroy all feeling for virtue, all family happiness with a ruthless hand. Only where the belief in God is deeply rooted in the heart can love for our fellow-creatures flourish and be healthfully developed, and the golden fruit of peace, happiness and public welfare reach maturity. He who tears the belief in God out of his heart destroys also hope and love, and changes it into a desolate waste.

Oettingen says, in his "Statistics of Morals:" "In all phenomena of corruption the most characteristic is that truly fiendish law of heartless selfishness which has its root in irreligion, and which results in hopelessness. Why? Because it is born of suspicious doubt in a divine order of things, in a union of necessity and freedom; in short, because it ruthlessly destroys that beautiful problem which is before us. It destroys confidence in the divine, ruling love; it rejects childlike obedience as something unworthy of man, and thinks that the authoritative ordering of the conditions of nature is an attempt to interfere with the absolute right of the individual. Thus history is changed into a play of accidents; will becomes lawless; chaos has returned; and death and corruption appear as the hopeless end of the purposeless and undignified turmoil which we call life."

Thomas Paine says : “ Do we want to contemplate God’s power ? We see it in the immensity of the creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom ? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence ? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy ? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful. In fine, do we want to know what God is ? Search not the book called the Scriptures, which any human hand might make, but the Scriptures called the Creation.

“ The only idea man can affix to the name of God is that of a *first cause*, the cause of all things. And, incomprehensible and difficult as it is for a man to conceive what a first cause is, he arrives at the belief of it from the tenfold greater difficulty of disbelieving it. It is difficult beyond description to conceive that space can have no end ; but it is more difficult to conceive an end. It is difficult beyond the power of man to conceive an eternal duration of what we call time ; but it is more impossible to conceive a time when there shall be no time. In like manner of reasoning, everything we behold carries in itself the internal evidence that it did not make itself. Every man is an evidence to himself that he did not make himself ; neither could his father make himself, nor his grandfather, nor any of his race ; neither could any tree, plant, or animal make itself ; and it is the conviction arising from this evidence that carries us on, as it were by necessity, to the belief of a first cause eternally existing, of a nature totally different from any material existence we know of, and by the power of which all things exist ; and this first cause man calls God.



“What more does man want to know than that the hand, or power, that made these things is divine, is omnipotent? Let him believe this with the force it is impossible to repel, if he permits his reason to act, and his rule of moral life will follow of course.”

Some years ago, in Kentucky, an atheist preacher made his appearance, of whom an eye-witness reports as follows: “It was Sunday evening. In the little town where I was staying there had been no divine service during the day. When it was dark and the streets were deserted, I took my steps to a neighboring wood, in order to be alone with my God. I had walked a little distance when I saw a light shining among the trees and heard the loud voice of a man. Thinking that I should find some religious meeting, I broke my way through the brushwood. A strange scene presented itself to my eyes. A sort of pulpit had been constructed of a pile of wooden blocks. It was lighted up by two torches, and before it were several rows of wooden benches, which were occupied by about two hundred people.

“The sight rather attracted me at the beginning, but I was terrified when the words which that man uttered reached my ear. With irreverent, bombastic words he preached the doctrine of unbelief, and attacked the belief in God with miserable jokes and scorn. It seemed to me as if a child with his bow and arrow attempted to shoot down a high mountain. Many of the audience seemed to listen with approval, whilst others appeared indifferent. When the speaker had finished he sat down, proud of the applause which he received, and looked around in a self-satisfied, victorious manner. Whilst I was considering whether I should leave, or make an attempt to refute him,



a man arose in the background and asked permission to speak. It was an old man, with gray hair, leaning upon a staff, who now made a speech, which, simple as it was, made such an impression on me that I shall not forget it as long as I live.

“ ‘Neighbors,’ he said, ‘I have lived many years among you. Seventy winters have bowed me down and have bleached my hair. I know you will listen to me. Over there in the churchyard I have buried two noble boys, and I look upon their graves as a bridge connecting me with the other world, which yonder scoffer wishes to represent as an impossibility; but now I will prove to you that there is a future world, and that he himself believes in it and is afraid of it.

“ ‘You all know the waterfall there below, the noise of which we can even now hear. A few days ago I stood above it, on the banks of the river, where the current of the stream becomes more rapid every moment. I saw a man in a boat which had just left the opposite shore to cross the river. When he had arrived in the middle of the current, one of his oars broke, and in his attempt to repair the damage he lost the other. I shall never forget the expression of terror which now spread over his face. He did not see me, but his loud cries for help resounded far away. One whirlpool after the other twirled his little boat and drew it nearer and nearer to the fall. Then he ceased his cries for help and fell down upon his knees to pray. I will not attempt to repeat his self-accusations and promises for the future. With the help of a neighbor, who was working close by, we succeeded in saving that man from certain death. A few minutes before he had been on the threshold of eternity; now he was safe on the shore.

“ ‘That is the man who is sitting yonder! When God’s powerful hand was about to take him into eternity, he prayed and promised to mend: now he blasphemes and denies that God upon whom he called, and who graciously granted his prayer.’

“The eyes of all fell upon the first speaker. Pale as the light of the moon which was shining upon him, he sat motionless; with clenched fists, he looked toward heaven with a frightened and wild expression. Then he jumped up, stood for a moment still, then, rushing through the crowd, hurried into the wood, where he disappeared. An involuntary shriek of horror came from the people, who had stood for a moment as if spellbound, and then silently dispersed. The old man and I alone remained on the spot. I seized his hand, and we wept together.”

How often do such emotional events take place! And there are no cases wanting where men who had led a life without God, returned to him when the end came near. An eloquent witness of this class we find in the poet Heinrich Heine, who was an acknowledged atheist during the whole of his life, who scorned religion with his biting wit. He spared nothing. He returned finally to God. In the epilogue to his “*Romancero*” he writes as follows: “Yes, I have returned to God, like the Prodigal Son. After having tended for many years the hogs with the Hegelites, I became homesick for heaven, and wandered forth through mountains and woods, over the most difficult passes of Dialectics. On my road I found the God of Pantheism, but I could not use him. This poor, melancholy being is interwoven with the world and, as it were, imprisoned in it, and yawns before you helpless and without will. In order to have a will it is necessary to be a

person. If we want a God, we must accept his personality, his superiority to the world, and his holy attributes, all-goodness, all-wisdom and all-justice; and then we get the immortality of the soul, as it were, into the bargain."

Happy the man who is at peace with God before the shades of death fall on his bed! Unbelief trembles before death; faith is triumphant.

The Abbe Lamennais says, in his "Words of a Believer:" "There are men who do not love God and do not fear him. Flee from them, for a vapor of damnation arises from them.

"Flee the godless, for his breath is killing; but do not hate him; for who knows if God has not turned his heart already?

"A man who even candidly confesses that he does not believe, often deceives himself. In the depth of his heart there is a root of faith which cannot wither.

"The words which deny God burn our lips.

"The ungodly stands alone in the universe. All creatures praise God; everybody who feels blesses him; everybody who thinks worships him; the stars of the day and the stars of the night sing to him in their mysterious language. He has written his holy name on the firmament; he has also written it in the heart of man, and the righteous keep it there lovingly."

As long as the greatest minds lead men on the road to progress, to the glorification of the spirit, religious sentiments will be ennobled and strengthened. Their powerful sayings do not perish, because they are verified by history and science, by the authority of eminent thinkers and poets, by the demands of increasing civilization and the wants of a better future, and—to name the first last—by the holy instincts of man's nature.

Look at the beams of sunlight which fall into your room. You see in them millions of little atoms in continual motion, but which are not visible when they are not lighted up by the sun. Thus it is with the sunlight of truth. In its light you recognize the errors which have surrounded you.

## THE SPIRIT OF MAN AND IMMORTALITY.

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The human life is like a book in two volumes, full of instruction. The first of these volumes is open before us ; but the second is closed, and will not be opened until the hour of our death.

Man stands at the head of the material world. His spirit, which proceeds from, and returns to, the Spirit of the world, the Supreme Being, is the essence of his life. His body is only its transitory form ; and the belief in immortality is the bridge which leads us into the other world, where the spirit is destined to be loosened from the fetters of the senses and advance to a higher development. It is a light which throws a glimmer into the dark life of the future.

The belief in immortality dwelt in the heart of man long before the origin of Christianity, although the pagan nations did not regard immortality as a purely spiritual life, but hoped for the enjoyment of sensual desires in the other world, without the trouble of earthly cares. Like the Indians of to-day, they imagined a future world where they would find everything that was agreeable to them, which satisfied the wants of their earthly existence ; for this purpose they put arms, household utensils and other things, into the graves of their departed. This is indeed a childlike form of belief in immortality, but, nevertheless, it is a proof that during all times there have been a desire and a hope in the heart of man for immortality. This feeling is not educated, but born within us. The missionary Livingstone found in Central Africa, among

the most uncultivated tribes, whom all travelers have represented as standing on the very lowest steps of civilization, an indication that they had some presentiment of a future life.

Nevertheless, the immortality of the human spirit is frequently considered as an open question, as a problem which the human mind is not able to solve. Numerous writings have been published about this most important subject, without reaching any definite conclusion; and there are some among the modern scientists who altogether deny the possibility of a future existence. But is immortality an unsolved or unsolvable problem, or is it not almost a certainty? Nature and science teach us that *nothing* in this world which has once been created is perishable; that the primary matter from which everything in this world proceeds does not perish, but remains the same. However, it may change in form, so that that which composes our human body to-day will in fifty or a hundred years supply food for a future generation. If you burn wood or coal, not an atom is lost: a large portion becomes a part of the atmosphere which is necessary for the existence of men, animals and plants. Only the form of the body and the relation of its composites perish, but not the actual matter. What once exists cannot be annihilated. Chemistry teaches us that in a thousand cases what we call extinction, and what appears to us to be lost altogether, is only a change of form. All matter continues in constant rotation, constant union and dissolution, withering and blooming, an apparent extinction and a new life.

If we now assume that *nothing* which exists in the world or the universe can be destroyed, but is only subject to a

change of form, should the *spirit of man*, the offspring of the eternal spirit of the world, be subject to annihilation, or should it rather be assured of eternal existence? Indeed, where *nothing* perishes, the *spirit of man also cannot perish*; it will and *must* inherit eternal life. And if millions of years go by, the spirit, *the life of our life, cannot perish*.

Does it require further proof of the immortality of the spirit? There are many more.

There is an indestructible desire and hope and belief in immortality in all mankind which nothing can extinguish. And is it possible that the Supreme Being could have planted so firmly within us this deep longing, this cheerful hope, this steady belief, this undeniable presentiment of immortality, only to prepare for us the most fatal of all disappointments? No; these feelings could not be born within us if the fulfillment of them were not absolutely certain. We should have to doubt God's fatherly love and justice, to assume that he would have created these longings within us without giving them perfect satisfaction finally.

There would be no sense in the whole life and work of man, his striving after perfection, if our spiritual being came to an end with bodily dissolution. Man could not fulfill his destiny if the spiritual gifts which he has brought with him into the world were not to be fully developed.

Can our present life be reasonably supposed to be the only intention of our existence, and of the existence of mankind in general?

Is it not a proof of the truth of this presentiment of immortality that we are continually striving after moral perfection, after a perfection which we cannot reach here?



Why should this longing and desire be within us if they did not find final satisfaction ?

Should the spirit of a being which is able to imagine eternal life not also be imperishable ?

Should the immortality of the Supreme Being, of the eternal Spirit of the world, not be a pledge for the immortality of our own spirit, which proceeds from the Spirit of the world ?

Does the religious principle within us not indicate a being which is intended for a higher union than that with the visible world ?

Does not our whole destiny, the aim of all morality, become more elevated when we see immortality as a guiding star before us ?

The little grain of seed contains the future plant, with its leaves, with the germ of the blossom, and the fruit ; in the caterpillar and the chrysalis of insects we discover traces of the future wings. All these germs bear evidence of a future destiny ; and man, the mediator between two worlds, who belongs half to the world of the spirit and half to the world of dust,—should he carry within him for nothing all these germs and indications of a future existence ? Nature, which forms and prepares everything for the future, and keeps so faithfully its promises, would become a lie in this instance, where it has reached the climax of visible creation.

Are there really people who do not believe in immortality ? If the child in the mother's womb could think, could it be persuaded that some day it would be freed from its shell and enjoy in open air the vivifying light and warmth of the sun ? Would it not rather believe in the impossibility of such a state of existence ? And do those

who reject the belief in immortality reason more sensibly than the unborn child, if they will not accept as a truth that which they cannot perceive with their earthly organs? One look into the inexhaustible variety of nature, a sensible consideration of all causes which make the idea of the immortality of the spirit in the highest degree possible—indeed, as good as certain—should convince them of the instability of their conclusion.

Plato says, in his “Phaedon :” “If our spirit is mortal, then our reason is nothing but a dream ; then virtue loses all the splendor which makes it divine in our eyes ; then all that is beautiful, moral and sublime is not a reflection of divine perfection, for nothing that is perishable can contain even a trace of divine perfection ; then we are placed here, like animals, to seek food and to die ; then a few days after our death it will be the same whether we have been an ornament or a disgrace to creation—whether we have endeavored to increase the number of the happy or the miserable ; then the most degraded man has the power to evade the divine rule, and a dagger can cut the tie which joins man to God. If our spirit is perishable, then the wisest lawgivers and founders of human society have cheated either us or themselves ; then the whole human race has agreed upon speaking an untruth, and to honor the deceivers who have invented it ; then a state of free, thinking beings is nothing but a herd of irrational beasts ; and man—I shudder at the very thought of considering him in this depraved condition—once deprived of the hope of immortality, this miraculous being becomes the most miserable animal upon earth, who, to his misery, is able to reflect on his condition, and must fear death and despair.” In another part Plato says : “The body is

the prison from which the soul \* must be delivered before it is able to understand real and unchangeable conditions."

Cicero says: "If I consider the faculties with which the human soul is endowed—the rapidity of thought, the wonderful faculty to remember former events, the acuteness with which it looks into the future, the innumerable treasures of arts and sciences—then I gain absolute certainty that this always active and comprehensive principle cannot be perishable; that this unceasing activity of the soul does not proceed from the outside, but rests upon an inner, essential power; and I come to the unavoidable conclusion that its activity must continue forever."

Plutarch says: "Not with weeping and lamentations should we follow the burial of good people, but with songs of praise and gratitude that they have ceased to be mortals, and have passed into a better life."

Pythagoras says: "When thy spirit has left the body, thou wilt be free from mortality and dwell with the gods."

A Mohammedan philosopher, Al-Gazzali, in the beginning of the eleventh century, wrote: "God has created the human spirit from a drop of his own spirit, and its destiny is to return to God. Do not deceive thyself with the idea that the spirit will die with the body. The form in which thou hast entered the world is not the same which thou hast now; therefore, it is not necessary that the spirit should perish with the body. The spirit is only a stranger in this world, and has only a temporary abode here. After

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\*The difference between soul and spirit is an idea of modern times; and we must not think it strange that in the writings of the ancient, and even later, authors we read of the immortality of the soul. In the works of those authors soul and spirit are synonymous.

the temptations and storms of this peaceless life, we shall be united with God and find eternal peace—peace without care, joy without pain, strength without weakness, knowledge without doubt, a delightful insight into the source of life, light and splendor—that source from which we have proceeded.”

The Hindoo Bhagavadgita says: “The soul is the principle of life, which divine wisdom has intended to give life to the body. The body is perishable and mortal; the soul, which thinks and acts, is immortal. There is a superior, invisible and eternal life which cannot perish, whatever else may perish; and those who have gained this life will never return.”

In a Buddhist work we find the following expression: “Man does not die: the soul inhabits the body only for a time, and leaves it again after a time. The soul is myself, the body is only my temporary dwelling. Birth is not birth: the soul is there already, and lives before the body is begotten. Death is not death: when the body dies the soul ascends.”

Thus, as we see, the idea of immortality existed long before Christianity, and has been kept alive through all times. From time to time a philosopher has appeared who has denied immortality; but he has never been able to prove his assertion. Yet the great majority of philosophers have belonged to the champions of immortality; among these are Leibnitz, Genlieux, Malebranche, and others. Even Kant, that severe thinker, who would not accept any compromise, and who banished all that is supersensual from the domain of human knowledge, considered the idea of immortality as a necessary corollary of practical reason.

The fact that all nations of antiquity were in the habit of offering sacrifices to the spirits of their dead, or addressed prayers to them, is a further proof that they entertained the belief in immortality. Greeks and Romans, Hindoos and Chinese, were in the habit of making sacrifices upon the graves of their departed, on the anniversary of their deaths, and of addressing prayers to them. And do we not do the same to this day? Do we not put flowers upon the graves of our dear departed? Surely, we do not do this to honor the decaying body below, but to honor the spirit which has once dwelt in that body, and of which we believe that it now enjoys a superior state of existence.

Let us look upon the ancient nations.

The old Greeks and Romans believed in a continuation of the spirit under another form, and also in a world of the spirits of the departed, which they called Hades, or the Lower World.

The Pythagoreans taught that the soul would be free from the fetters of the body, would enter the world of the dead, would dwell there for a longer or shorter period in a state of transition, would enter again an animal or human body, until it was purified sufficiently to return to its source.

The Essenes considered the belief in immortality as the only foundation of virtue.

The Mohammedans also believe in immortality.

Zoroaster, the prophet of the Persians, promised to those who withstood temptation and who did good, immortality in regions of the highest splendor.

The old Egyptians believed that the soul of the departed had to undergo different changes, and that he

who was not virtuous would enter into the body of an animal.

The heathen Germans believed that the spirits of brave men went to Wotan, the father of the gods, who dwells in Walhalla; the cowards went into a world of mist.

The belief in a future life prevails universally among the Hindoos and Buddhists. If one of them dies, they do not say that he is dead, but that his spirit has departed.

The Brahmins maintain the belief in immortality; and the Vedas teach that man should purify his soul by devotion, and that after the death of the body it enters another form, according to its measure of worthiness, until at last it reaches the infinite Being from whom it has proceeded.

According to the idea of the ancient Etruscans, the spirit of the deceased remained in the house, and became a guardian spirit, in case the departed had been a good man; if he had not led a righteous life, his spirit would become a spectre, which would haunt the house.

The ancient Celts gave letters and orders for future rewards in heaven to their dead. They also put shoes on them, that they might not be barefooted on their journey to the lower world.

The heathen Slavs placed food by the side of their dead, and believed that their spirits were ghostlike shadows until their bodies were buried.

The old inhabitants of Esthland, Livland and Kurland with their dead burned their horses and arms for use in the other world.

However different all these views of immortality may be, they show irrefutably that among all ancient nations this belief existed in one or another form, however different from our own views theirs may have been. This belief



exists among those nations who to this date are living in their natural state, without culture.

Let us look for a moment at these.

The Ostiaks and Laps bury their dead in little boats for use in the other world. According to their ideas, the soul has to travel through darkness and thorny bushes before it reaches the abode of the happy. They give their dead hatchets and other tools, and the means to make light, so that they may cut their way through the thorns and give light to the darkness.

The Esquimaux believe that after awhile they rise again from their graves, and will take their muskets and other implements which have been buried with them, and wander until they reach a great river. Here they will stop to drink from the water; and, if they have loved their wife and child, and have hunted to provide for them, have assisted their neighbors, led a peaceful life, and committed no murder, the water will taste well to them; and a boat will come across the river and take them to the other side, to the land of the blessed.

The Kamtschatkan, after his death, has to walk across a swinging bridge without railing, and so narrow that only one soul can cross it at a time. He hopes that his soul will be again united to his body, and that he will then lead a life of work, but of happiness and contentment.

The Kalmucks believe that immediately after death the spirit of the god Abida comes to take away the soul. The pure soul he leaves to hover in the air; the soul of the impure he blows away, after having rolled it up, and then it is at liberty to enter the body of a man or an animal; which explains the circumstance that so many living people have the manners and habits of others that have been



dead long ago. The dead walk on a copper road to the dwelling of the Tengren, the abode of repose, where they have to wait until they are considered worthy to enter paradise.

The Greenlander, in order to reach the abode of the dead, must for many days climb over rugged rocks, which are often stained with his own blood. The rest of the journey after this is still full of danger, if it has to be made in winter or in stormy weather. In order to make the journey easy for the departed soul, those who remain behind must for five days abstain from certain food, and avoid all noisy work except the necessary fishing; after that, there can be no doubt about the safe arrival of the departed in the land of the blessed.

The souls of the Schaman Siberians are exposed to the attacks of unholy spirits which try to harm them.

The Telentian and Korack Schamans attempt to allay the spirits of the earth, at the funerals of the dead, by certain prayers, and by fighting in the air with a hatchet. The bodies of the dead are put upon trees, and are either burned or left to decay, to make sure that the souls escape the attacks of the evil spirits.

The Tcheremissians put a club by the side of the dead, to drive away the hellish bloodhounds; they hope that the dead will always have cattle and bees in abundance; that they will be free from all disease, and be immortal.

Many nations of Eastern and Northern Asia imagine the other world to be a cheerful and agreeable abode, where the departed live without trouble and according to their wishes. The woods are full of game, the rivers abound in fish, the trees are full of fruits, and the earth offers its treasures without labor.

According to the idea of the Caribbees, the righteous will find in the other world a rich plain upon which apricot-trees are planted, bearing fruit in abundance. The cowards and the unrighteous have to cross the mountains into a sterile and desolate region, where they have to serve as slaves to their enemies, and where they have to lead a life of hardship and trouble.

The traveler Richardson heard from an old Indian of the Crees, on Hudson Bay, that the departed souls had to climb with great difficulty over a steep mountain, whence they enjoy the view of a vast plain which abounds in game of all kinds, and where happy people dwell in new tents and wear new fur clothes. As soon as they behold the soul of the righteous on the mountain, they go and lead him down; but the wicked, particularly murderers, are pushed down from the rock.

The old Mexicans believed in the transmigration of souls. The souls of the nobles went into beautiful, sweetly singing birds; those of the common people into weasels and all kinds of common insects.

The Patagonians think that their dead dwell in caves with kind gods, the chief of whom is the god of death. Their idea of happiness consists in a continued state of intoxication. The wizards, who are held in great veneration among the Patagonians, assert that by beating their drums and shaking their enchanted boxes they can see below the ground men and beasts, and whole vaults full of rum and brandy. They think that the stars are the departed Patagonians.

The Chibchas, a nation in New Granada, think that the righteous after death enjoy all the pleasures of life in an abundant manner.

The old Peruvians divided the world after death according to caste. The common people went to the lower world, the nobles to the sun.

The old Chilians thought the abode of the blessed was on the other side of the ocean, where a superabundance of meat and strong drinks was to be found. Their paradise was full of beautiful women, always ready to wait upon the men and prepare fermented drinks for them.

The Mamoacas delighted so much in the antics of the ape, that they filled their paradise with these animals for the enjoyment of the blessed.

The South Sea Islanders believe that the souls of their nobles, who have many servants and hogs, assemble on the top of a high mountain, whence they sink down into a happy country where all kinds of precious food grow in abundance, and which is made beautiful by the tranquil waters of an azure sea, where the blessed feed in abundance and bathe at their pleasure. The slaves and poor come into a dark country with slimy water.

The Battas distinguish six heavens. The good people who have been kind and peaceful, if they do not belong to the nobility, go into the third heaven; the nobility go into the sixth heaven, and the wicked, as a punishment, must wander about the earth.

Even more numerous are the heavens among the Sintos, in Japan, where the virtuous reach the highest, the thirty-third.

The Ibos and the Odschi, negro tribes in Africa, worship one godhead, which has created everything, the black and the white. The name of this godhead is Tschucku. It has two eyes and two ears, the one in heaven and the other upon earth; it never slumbers, and is invisible upon earth,

but the righteous can see it after death; the wicked are burned.

However low the negro may be in his religious ideas, the belief in a life after death is found in almost all tribes.

The Kaffirs honor the souls of the departed with particular respect. Also, the rude tribes of Jacoba, the Marghi and M'Pongwes, have particular rites dedicated to the spirits of the departed.

The Shekani and Bakeles also have great reverence for the bodies of the dead. The Yorubas and Susus believe that the spirit of a dead person sometimes enters the body of his grandchild and causes disease. In Nufsi the belief prevails that the wicked who are not punished in this life are punished by God afterward. Many negro tribes, as, for instance, the Odschi, think that the Milky Way is the heavenly road by which the good reach the union with God and with their ancestors.

Most of the North American Indian tribes believe that man has two souls, the best of which, after death, is sent into a sunny land.

According to the belief of the Hurons, the soul is parted from the body at death, but remains at the grave until the funeral festival, when it is changed into a turtle dove, or goes immediately into the abode of the spirits. The second soul—the Hurons believe in two souls—remains with the body in the grave until it is reproduced by somebody in the form of a child. According to this idea of transmigration of souls, they assume that many a living person resembles, in his own being and life, one of the dead.

The Selish, in the interior of Oregon, look upon beavers as men whom the great Spirit has transformed for some act of disobedience.

If many Indians believe in the existence of two souls, the Caribbees presume even three. The soul which dwells in the heart becomes happy after death; the two other souls, which dwell in the arms and the head respectively, do not partake of the happiness of the soul of the heart.

The Chiriguanas, in South America, believe that the departed frequently reappear in the shape of animals.

The Aracaunians bury their males with weapons and provisions, and their females with kitchen utensils and the spinning-wheel, which they may use in a future life. They throw ashes on the road on which the dead is carried to the grave, so that his soul may not return from the regions of the spirits.

Among the Manjaticas a priest is called in to take the soul to the regions of the other world. The priest pours water on the ground to purify the soul.

The Guaranis, in Paraguay, leave room in the grave of the dead so that the soul may have space to remain by the body.

This is more than sufficient testimony to show that the belief in immortality exists even among the most uncultivated nations. Traces of this belief are found in all parts of the world and among all nations, even amongst those who stand on the lowest step of culture and intelligence.

And we find among ourselves, and in our whole lives, many indications of immortality. Among these, there is that peculiar phenomenon which, as we have a presentiment of life *after* death, gives us an idea that our spirit existed *before* it became conscious on this earth—that is to say, that it has had a previous existence. Certain events occur quite unexpectedly in our lives, sometimes events of very little importance, which force us to ask with astonish-

ment whether we have not experienced this before; yet the most careful reflection does not enlighten us where and when it could have taken place.

Volkett says, in his work on the soul: "It happens often that in the midst of our thoughts we are suddenly touched by a familiar sound, which disappears again in a moment. It is like a breath of thought which only reaches the extreme limits of our consciousness; we try to catch it, but it has already disappeared. We feel as if something quite familiar, but belonging to a period long gone by, were touching our memory."

Many authors who have written on the life of the soul have spoken of the same phenomenon, for instance, Professor Knight, who says: "Very many can testify, before their own consciousness at least, to the following experience. We hear a sound, see an object, or suffer a sensation which takes us directly out of the circle of sense-perception possible to us in our present existence."

*Can* this feeling, this sensation, be anything else than the remembrance of a former spiritual life? Do they not point to a previous existence of our spirit, and are they not a proof of it? Plato says that if our spirit is immortal, it *must* naturally have had an existence previously to our natural life. This sensation, which, as it were, permits a view into a former existence, may be doubted by many to whom it is new, and who may never have experienced it. Nevertheless, it is a positive truth, like other phases of our spiritual life which are not understood, and are therefore falsely judged. The dream-life, forebodings, presentiments, somnambulism, clairvoyance and second-sight, belong to these. It would be in vain to try to *explain* the phenomena of spiritual life, these facts



of a super-sensual world, for that which is above our senses cannot be explained by means of them ; on the contrary, we must rely upon proved and actually accomplished facts, to deny which would be as foolish as the belief in miracles.

Somnambulism furnishes us a beautiful proof of the assertion that the human spirit is a free power, which, in spite of its limitations by the body, can be independent of it and visibly active. Somnambulists will arise in the midst of a perfectly sound sleep and begin to work at their usual occupation, or at one which is entirely strange to them, with greater skill than they would be able to exercise in a waking condition. The fact that when they are awake they have not the slightest recollection of what they have done in their sleep, is a proof that their *senses* were perfectly unconscious whilst asleep, and that the spirit does not require these senses for its activity. The strangest phenomenon is this—that somnambulists, during the hours of their nightly work, are perfectly conscious of what they were doing when awake, and also of what they did in former hours of somnambulism. This has been established by the work which they have performed in their sleep. Others have arisen in the middle of the night and sat down at their desks, working, while sleeping, as if they were awake ; returned to their beds in the same condition, slept till morning, and found their work lying finished on the table. For instance, Condillac wrote, in this condition, his “Cours d’Etudes ;” mathematicians like Krueger solved the most difficult problems ; the celebrated printer Operinus continued in the night, sleeping, the most difficult proof-work, which he had begun on the previous evening ; Haller and others wrote poetry ; musicians composed music ; and so forth. A young



French clergyman used to rise in the middle of the night, sleeping, sit down at his desk, and write out a part of his sermon. The frequent corrections and improvements which he made in his writing were sufficient proof that this was not mere mechanical labor; for instance, after having written "*ce divin enfant*," he scratched it out and wrote "*cet adorable enfant*," which he again changed into "*cet enfant adorable*." The Archbishop of Bordeaux observed him once, and made some experiments to ascertain if he used his sight with his work. The sheet of paper which the sleeping man had placed before him was cautiously taken away and replaced by another. If this sheet was of different size or shape, the sleeper would notice the difference; but if the paper was similar to the sheet which was taken away from him, he would not become aware of the change. An opaque screen was placed between his eyes and the paper, but he continued to write without impediment. A young student frequently arose in the middle of the night, lighted his lamp, and sat down and solved the most difficult problems of algebra and geometry, after which he would extinguish the light and return to bed. A banker in Amsterdam once requested a professor of mathematics to solve for him a very complicated problem of arithmetic. The professor entrusted the work to some of his pupils. One of them went to bed with his head full of the task, and was not a little astonished to find on the following morning his table covered with papers on which the calculation had been completely and satisfactorily worked out; and, as the entire work was written in his own handwriting, it proved beyond all question that he himself had done the work during the night in a sleeping and unconscious condition.

Weinholt gives an account of a young man who rose in his sleep during the night, sat down at the piano, selected a piece of music, and performed it with perfect correctness. On one occasion a friend of his turned the piece of music upside down; the somnambulist noticed this, and turned the sheet again the right way. On another occasion the sleeper found one of the strings very much out of tune; he opened the instrument, tuned it, and continued to play.

In face of this often-proved fact—that the spirit is in full activity whilst the body is sleeping—nobody will deny that there is a power in man which can be active and alive without the use of the senses. And who will deny that this power, this spirit, when it is entirely free from the body, can produce even greater effects, considering that it is able to produce such extraordinary effects when it is tied to the body?

Sleep has often been called the brother of death, and not altogether without cause; for in sleep, as in death, the body is motionless and inactive whilst the spirit is at work. This activity of the spirit appears in the living man in the dream-life. Experience and careful study have taught us much about this psychical phenomenon. In a healthy and sound sleep we do not dream, or only on rare occasions. Dreams generally occur in an unsound or disturbed slumber. Many, indeed, by far the great majority of dreams, are mere hallucinations of the spirit, which have their origin in outward circumstances, such as overloading the stomach, and others. These disappear like phantoms, and have generally escaped our memory the following morning. But there are some dreams which only rarely occur, which may be considered as heralds of the future and of another

life—prophetic dreams which are realized and can never be forgotten during our lifetime. Perthy says, in his "Views:" "When the spirit is free of earthly fetters, loosened, as it were, from the body, and returns to its own divine sphere, then we dream the truth."

Schubert and others who have written on the life of the soul and the spirit quote many such instances. We will repeat here a few of them.

On the 8th of October, 1847, a caravan consisting of fourteen adults and a few children, under the leadership of Captain Conroy, left St. Joseph, in Missouri, on its way to California. In the beginning of March, 1848, the caravan lost its way in the snow-covered California Sierras. After having consumed all their provisions, nothing was left to the unfortunate people but death from starvation. A few days' journey from the spot where they had stopped for their last rest there lived Captain Don Jose Bluent, who one night had a distinct vision in his dream of these unfortunate travelers. The idea that this dream might have shown him a reality, and that he might be called upon to be the savior of the starving emigrants, prompted him on the following day to gather a dozen men and set out in search of them.

On the 15th of March they reached the entrance of a snow-covered gap in the Sierras, and found a tree on which a sail-cloth was nailed, with the following inscription: "Take notice: Captain Conroy's emigrants have lost their way in the snow, and are encamped higher up in this gap. They are without provisions, and are starving. Left St. Joseph October 8, 1847. Left Salt Lake January 1, 1848. Reached here March 1, 1848. We lost one-half of our animals near the Platte River, and on the 20th of

February we were obliged to leave our wagons behind." Then followed the names of thirteen members of the caravan, the names of three children who had died on the road, and the name of an adult who had been lost on the 3d of February. After a few days' ride Bluent's party reached the camp, and everything was found as Bluent had seen it in his dream, and as he had told it to his companions. A number of the unfortunate people had already died from starvation. The few still alive were fortunately saved. The *Spanish Chronicle* of California, where this incident is related, states distinctly that the saving party merely set out in consequence of Bluent's dream.

There are many other accounts in existence of such prophetic dreams, and history relates them. Cæsar's wife, Calphurnia, warned him not to go to the Senate on the 15th of March of the year 44 before Jesus, because she had dreamed that his life would be in danger on that day. Cæsar did not obey the warning, and was murdered by Brutus during the session of the Senate.

Another historical dream is that of the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise. On the morning of the 31st of October, 1517, the day on which Luther nailed his Theses on the church-door of Wittenberg, he dreamt three successive times of a monk. The Elector himself wrote down his dream immediately after awaking: "I had fallen asleep in my bed, very tired, in the midst of saying a prayer. I awoke a few hours afterward, and lay awake, occupied with all sorts of thoughts, until after twelve o'clock. I prayed to God for grace that he would direct me and my Counsellors into the right path of government. I thought of the blessed saints, and prayed for the poor souls in purgatory. I fell asleep again, and I dreamt

that the Almighty God sent to me a monk, with a fine and honest countenance, who was the natural son of St. Paul, the blessed Apostle. All the blessed saints were with him, at God's command, to testify that he had been sent by God, and who commanded me to allow the monk to write something on the door of my chapel in Wittenberg. I told my Chancellor to tell him, as God commanded it, and as he had such powerful testimony, that he might write what he had been ordered to write. And now the monk began to write in Wittenberg, in such large letters that I could perfectly recognize them here in Schweinitz. The pen with which the monk wrote was so long that its end reached as far as Rome. There was a lion there, and the pen pierced both its ears, and stretched farther, until it reached the crown of His Holiness the Pope, and touched it so rudely that it began to shake, and was going to fall from His Holiness's head. As it was going to fall, it seemed to me as if E. L. and I were not far distant, and I stretched forth my hand to save the crown from falling. And thereupon I awoke, and still had my arms stretched out, and felt quite frightened, and angry with the monk that he did not write in a more modest manner. And when I came to think, I knew that it was a dream; but I was still full of sleep, and my eyes soon closed again. And when I was asleep, I dreamt again of the monk, and saw how he continued to write, and to stab the lion with his pen, and through the lion the Pope. And the lion roared so loudly that all the inhabitants of Rome and all the estates of the Holy Empire came to see what was the matter. Then the Pope desired that they should stop the monk and report to me what he was doing; and thereupon I awoke again, and was astonished that the dream should

return to me. But I was not afraid, and prayed to God that he would preserve His Holiness against all evil; and I fell asleep for the third time. Then the monk came again, and we tried to get the Pope away, and to break the monk's pen; but the more we tried to seize the pen, the stronger it became, and made a rattling noise, so that it hurt my ears; and we all grew angry and weary, and, one after the other, left the place. And as I was now again in Wittenberg, I sent word to the monk to ask him where he got this pen which was so strong and firm. And he sent word to me that the quill came from an old Bohemian Goose, a hundred years old;\* and he said one of his schoolmasters had given it to him, and had asked him, as it was such a good one, to use it for his sake; and he said that he had tempered it himself, and that it was so good and firm because you could not take away the spirit and the soul from it, as from other pens. And soon afterward there came a loud noise, as if many other quills had grown out of the monk's quill; and it was a pleasure to see how eager everybody was for them. And I made up my mind that I would talk to the monk myself; and thereupon I awoke again. This is my dream. I think it is not without significance. And I made up my mind that I would tell it to my Father Confessor, but finally resolved that I would first tell it to E. L. and to my Chancellor, and hear their opinion about it."

The world knows how this dream has been fulfilled.

The phenomena of presentiment, far-sight or second-sight, give us as deep an insight into the life of the spirit as dreams. A great number of people have either ex-

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\* Huss, 1415.



perienced these presentiments themselves, or have the testimony of nearest relations and friends in regard to them, which excludes all supposition of intentional deceit. The mere "I don't believe in it" means nothing. A scientific work which appeared some twenty years ago says, very modestly: "This is a phase of spiritual life upon which very little light has been thrown hitherto, and it is possible that intentional or unintentional deception has played some part in it. But many cases have been so firmly established, that only an exaggerated desire to doubt can dare to deny them. It is a task of latter times to lighten up this dark field with the light of scientific criticism, and to assign to these presentiments their proper place in the science of the soul-life of man."

Presentiment, far-sight or second-sight, are those faculties which dwell in certain persons, enabling them to foresee, to forebode, certain distant or future events. The presentiments of these people generally concern objects, persons or events in which they have no particular interest, which are often entirely unknown to them. The phenomenon of presentiment prevails in almost every country; but the gift of second-sight is found principally among the inhabitants of Scotland, Westphalia, Switzerland, the Shetland Islands, the Faroe Islands, and Lapland.

One of the most striking cases of this kind is the well-known foresight which Swedenborg had of the fire of Stockholm. Kant wrote about it to a friend as follows: "Toward the end of September, 1756, Swedenborg came on a Sunday afternoon, about four o'clock, to Gothenburg. He was received by a friend, who accompanied him to his house, where a little party had been arranged, to which fourteen people had been invited. In the midst of this



cheerful company Swedenborg became suddenly silent, and his face had an expression of profound grief. It was about six o'clock in the afternoon. Swedenborg left the room, and returned in a few moments in a state of great terror and anguish. When he was asked what was the matter with him, he said that just at this moment a fire had broken out in Stockholm, near St. Mary's Church, and was spreading with terrible rapidity. He left the room repeatedly in a state of great excitement. Among other details, he told the company that the house of one of his friends, whose name he gave, had already been completely destroyed, and that his own house was in great danger. About eight o'clock he exclaimed, in a tone of great joy: 'God be thanked! The fire has been extinguished, within only three houses of my own.' The Governor, who had heard of this incident, sent for Swedenborg on Monday morning. The latter gave to the Governor the most detailed description of the fire—the number of houses that had been destroyed, and also the time of the duration of the fire. On Monday evening a messenger arrived who had been sent by a Stockholm merchant to a business friend in Gothenburg; and on the following morning a special courier was sent with a description of the fire to the Governor. Both these men, in every detail, confirmed what Swedenborg had told the previous afternoon."

Buchanan, in his "History of Scotland," gives an account of another instance of second-sight having historical authority. James I. was murdered by Graham on the 20th of February, 1437. This deed was foreseen by a certain James Loudin, who at that time was lying sick in bed. It was about noon that he suddenly called to his family in an

excited manner: "Quick! quick! Hasten to help the King! He is already surrounded by the assassins who want to kill him!" A few minutes afterward he added: "Alas! it is too late: our good Lord is dead."

An instance of presentiment which occurred quite recently in London may finally be quoted here. The *London Mercury* states, in a number of September, 1882, that, a few days before, a well-dressed young man came in a state of great excitement to the editors' room, to ask if they had received any information of the names of those who had been killed in Alexandria. When he was told that no such details had yet been received, he said that the reason for his calling was that the mother and the wife of an officer of the name of Rivington, who was then stationed in Alexandria, had heard, toward evening of the previous day, the voice of the officer calling out in a plaintive tone, and three times in succession: "Mother!" On the following day the Admiralty informed the family of Captain Rivington that, at the same time they imagined they heard his voice, he had been shot in the streets of Alexandria.

Nothing speaks more strongly for the unlimited activity of the spirit, and for its immortality, than these pure, sublime visions of the spirit which are manifested by foresight and the presentiment of future events, when man passes over all earthly impediments and his spiritual nature enjoys perfect freedom.

The same is the case with somnambulism, or the so-called clairvoyance. We find traces of this phenomenon of spiritual life among the Indians, Egyptians and Greeks of ancient times. In the Middle Ages we find that Paracelsus, Kircher, and others, and afterward the English-

man, Foudde, have investigated this question. In modern times it was Mesmer, a Viennese physician, who first called public attention to the subject of clairvoyance, or animal magnetism, as this condition was named by him.

One of the most beautiful results of man's spiritual power is that richly endowed, wonderful clairvoyance, the germ which contains the precious fruit of assurance of a spiritual life. The spirit of a clairvoyant moves freely in a higher atmosphere, and proclaims things by means of his organ of speech, which is the only one still at his command; thus proving that his spirit, independent of his body, moves in a region which has not been reached by human vision, and that he has acquired information which surpasses the horizon of human consciousness. Clairvoyance is one of those spiritual phenomena of which very little is known at present, which has often been misunderstood and misrepresented, and altogether doubted. Intentional and unintentional deception may have played some part here, as in other cases; but, in spite of such abuses and misunderstandings, the truth of this phenomenon has been irrefutably established by thousands of instances, and by the observations and reports of distinguished physicians. Clairvoyance is one of the most remarkable indications of the existence of a superior, super-sensual world. It is a condition in which the human spirit, although it has not been released from the fetters of earthly life, has been able to elevate itself above it, to enter into the domain of causes, and to communicate things to us which the physical eye cannot perceive. Thus it happens that the clairvoyant sees before him places, events, objects and incidents of every kind, although they may be thousands of miles distant from him; and he is able to describe them in the

most minute manner. And, as a human body seems to be also transparent to his eye, he is enabled to indicate the location of certain diseases and accurately describe them. Many instances have happened in which clairvoyants have described diseases of persons whom they have never known or seen, and have given them appropriate prescriptions. It has also frequently occurred that they have announced the arrival of people whose approach they could neither see nor hear with their physical organs, and that they have frequently read sealed letters which have been placed near their stomach or on their forehead.

That the condition of clairvoyance is like to that at the approach of death is proved by the physical phenomena connected with it. All those which appear at the hour of death can be distinguished, to a certain degree, in the condition of clairvoyance. The body appears lifeless, the senses are apparently extinguished, voluntary movements cease, and breathing and the pulse, in the highest state of ecstasy, are scarcely perceptible. This deathlike, magnetic sleep is followed by an awakening which appears to be more like that which will follow death, than that which occurs after ordinary sleep. The face of the clairvoyant becomes suddenly animated; the eyes are firmly closed; but an inward life is revealed which changes the expression of pain, or of indifferent repose, into that of ecstasy and complete consciousness. Such an expression is very much like that which, at the moment of intense enthusiasm, animates the face of a man, or that which sometimes glorifies the face of the dying at the last moment.

All these phenomena, and each one in itself, furnish the proof that our belief in immortality and our hope for it are based upon a firm foundation.

If I do not here mention spiritualism as one of the phases of spiritual life, it is because I do not wish to write positively on any subject about which I have gained no absolute certainty, and to this conviction I have not arrived in the case of spiritualism. But this movement has effected one good result. In 1856, the followers of this doctrine in the United States were estimated at two and a half millions; in 1860, at four millions; and Judge Edmonds, a well-known and zealous spiritualist, published, June 12th, 1867, in the *Banner of Light*, a letter in which he estimates their number at from ten to eleven millions. The authority of such a man, of undoubted integrity, should be received without reserve. This is a satisfactory proof how deeply the belief in immortality rests in the heart of man, for it is exactly this belief which has called into life the movement of spiritualism.

Man consists of spirit, soul and body. The spirit, as the principle of the super-sensual, is distinct from the bodily, sensual nature—that is to say, from the body, and the soul which we imagine gives life to the body. The spirit is that imperishable power which is only temporarily united with the body, which is manifested in imagination and in the struggles of thought and will; whilst the soul, supported by and dependent on the sensual organs, regulates our feeling. Many animals have a soul in common with man, as we may assume with certainty when we consider their instinct and intelligence. The difference between an animal's soul and the human soul is this—that man possesses the spirit by the side of the soul, but that the animal is purely material, and devoid of spiritual power and faculty, and, for that reason, can have no idea of God.

A modern writer expresses himself as follows on this subject: "Man, with his infinitely varying relations and positions, with his natural—we might say animal—instinct, experiences an extraordinary, active soul-life, which animates his heart with a thousand different feelings of good and evil, love and hatred, pride, vanity, ambition, and innumerable hopes and desires. All these are directed to one aim—the satisfaction of desires which give peace to the heart, which make life more comfortable, more cheerful, more agreeable, or to those which satisfy our passions. These are the manifestations of the soul, of that power of life the aspirations of which do not rise beyond the life and well-being of the body, and which, therefore, are almost invariably in harmony with the body, and find contentment in satisfying its demands.

"How different are the manifestations of the spirit, this power which we might call, by way of illustration, the organ of intelligence! How often is it opposed to the aspirations of the soul, which frequently aims at the satisfaction of sensual desires only! We hear its threatening voice; it forces us to resign enjoyments which we have ardently desired, or it punishes with bitter repentance the satisfaction of unholy desires. The most depraved soul has suddenly come to the knowledge of its unrighteousness by one flash of lightning from the spirit. And if the spirit of man is only the seed of a higher spiritual being after death, it is strong and powerful enough to admonish us to return, and to bring us to the consciousness that all desires, the satisfaction of all the wishes of the soul, cannot give contentment and peace unless the voice of the spirit, our reason, is also satisfied.



“Thus we see three entirely distinct, vital activities within us. One of these prevails in the vegetable kingdom, the other in the animal kingdom, both of which live only for, and aspire to, material things. The third is manifested in an entirely different tendency: it strives to free itself from materialism; it is opposed to it, and originates in a strange and unknown dominion. Its hopes and aspirations go beyond visible existence; it seems to be a stranger in this world of matter, and points toward a higher destiny.”

Even here on earth our spirit, while it is dwelling in our body, enables us to remove ourselves in one moment to the most distant regions and places. When we are far away from home, does not our spirit carry our thoughts thither? We visit every place that has been dear to us; we speak to our distant friends without being seen or heard by them. And it carries us into the immeasurable universe, far above, where millions of worlds travel on their course. Truly, our spirit belongs to the universe, not to the earth, this little atom of sphere.

Our *spirit* is immortal, but not our soul.

In our soul, as has been said above, there dwell not only love, kindness, faith and all other good qualities, but also the evil ones—anger, hatred, malice, revenge and cunning. Now, if the soul were immortal; then our evil qualities would be immortal also. Is such an idea possible? The activity of the soul is dependent on the sensual organs, and, as these organs die with the body, the soul also must lose its activity with them, and cannot be immortal. It is different with the spirit, which does not depend upon the organs of the body; for a man may be deprived of the use of every one of his senses, yet he will be able to *think*



—that is to say, be spiritually active. That man is able to *think* when every *sensual* function has ceased, even that of movement and feeling, has been proved by innumerable cases of apparent death—where people with their eyes closed have been lying in their coffins, perfectly understanding everything going on around them, and looking with terror upon the prospect of being buried alive, without the power to give the least sign of life.

Christianity bases the belief of immortality upon the dogma of the resurrection of Jesus; but if this dogma, as is really the case, proves to be contrary to all laws of nature, what becomes of the Christian belief in immortality? We come to an entirely different result if we disregard all miracles, and all that is opposed to natural laws, and look for the causes of our belief in immortality in the phenomena which manifest themselves in observation of the activity of the spirit. Christianity teaches that, on the last day of judgment, all who have ever lived upon earth shall arise again from their graves and receive judgment. Is it possible to believe that the bodies of men who have been dead for thousands of years, and which have decayed under ground, and have become dust and ashes, and have passed into other forms, and have served as food for the living—is it possible, we say, to imagine that they can come to life again? And can we represent to ourselves—supposing that the earth, as the Bible teaches, has existed five thousand years only—that five thousand times as many people as are existing now can find room on earth?

Christianity teaches us, also, that those who have led a righteous life will be rewarded in the world to come, while those who have done evil will be punished. How does this agree with our idea of the justice and love of the

Supreme Being—that those who have done wrong on this earth, where they have been surrounded by earthly temptations, should be punished in eternity? No other creed contains such a terrible and cruel doctrine as the Christian dogma of eternal punishment.

And if we seek for the Christian heaven, where the righteous are rewarded, and the Christian hell, where the wicked are punished, where shall we find them? Nowhere. We do not find in heathen mythology the idea of hell, but the myth of a heaven. Like very many other ideas of Christianity, that of the dwelling-place of the righteous has its origin in heathen traditions. Greek mythology tells us that Jupiter had his throne above the heavenly vault, where he and the other inhabitants of heaven occupied magnificent castles and palaces, whence they could overlook the entire earth. This abode of the gods was called, among the Greeks, Olympus. *We* no longer believe that the Supreme Being, like an earthly prince, sits upon a throne, and that his throne is somewhere beyond the clouds. The belief in hell is pretty well overcome in our days; and even Christian clergymen begin to preach against this doctrine. The belief in heaven, the contrast of hell, must naturally end with the belief in hell. Heaven and hell are the inventions of former times, which had no understanding of what was within and beyond them.

If Christianity teaches us that we shall be rewarded in a future world for the good that we have done here; and be punished for the evil we have committed, it only excites our selfishness. We should do good, not in hope of reward, but because it is right to do so; we should avoid evil, not out of fear of punishment, but because it is wrong to do evil. He who believes in immortality should not connect

it with future reward or punishment, as the Christian Church teaches it. Our task upon earth is to do good, to fulfill our duties toward our fellow-creatures, not for the sake of heavenly or earthly advantages. Man will find reward and punishment for his actions here upon earth, in his own conscience. This inner judge speaks, although sometimes late, so clearly and distinctly that his voice cannot be stifled either by wild dissipation or by skepticism or sophistry, but only by earnest, honest repentance. But he who has tried honestly to do his duty, and to do right, finds a supreme reward in his peace of mind. He who desires particular reward for virtue and righteousness, has already lost this assumed privilege, for virtue does not desire reward.

The bridge which leads us from this earthly life to a higher one is the death of our body. Let us observe, briefly, the last moment which brings our earthly life to a close.

Strictly speaking, man does not live once, but he has a threefold existence. The first is that of continued sleep; the second, a change from sleeping to waking; the last, a continued consciousness. The first is that which he leads unconsciously in his mother's womb; the second is his life upon earth, where his spirit is developed and prepared for greater perfection; the third, after the spirit has left the body, is purely spiritual. The transition from the unconscious to the conscious life is called birth; the end of our life on earth is called death, whilst in reality it is only a birth—the birth of a new existence of perfection.

Plato says, in his "Phaedon:" "He who is truly devoted to love and wisdom will use his life to make himself familiar with death, will learn how to die."

Wieland says, in his "Euthanasia:" "The consciousness that we have never desired to do wrong, but always wished to do good, and have done good to the best of our ability, gives a condition of peace and repose to our last hours which I consider as the beginning of that blissful state which religion promises. He who is conscious of good at such a moment, trusts that all nature is good, and looks forward to the future without fear and anxiety, whatever may happen. Such a soul clings like a child to the mother's breast, with a feeling of perfect safety in the Infinite, and passes unconsciously from a life to which it will never wake again.

"And when our last moment approaches, and we might desire to remain and work a little longer here, we should humbly bow down and say: 'Not as I will, Eternal Love, but as thou wilt;' and we should rely upon the divine thought that death is the crown of earthly life and the golden gate of spiritual life."

He who has watched by the bedside of dying people will know that, with few exceptions, the transition from this into a future life contains nothing terrible. There is no feeling of horror or anxiety to disturb the last hours of the righteous; on the contrary, we have many proofs that, as life disappears, serenity and a feeling of delightful ease and freedom will come over the face of the dying; and we frequently find in the features after death an expression of the bliss of the last moment. Experience has taught us that dying people have often seen objects which cannot be described with our limited speech. They hear heavenly melodies, and their spiritual powers are heightened to such a degree that they give expression, with the most intense feeling, as if inspired, to the visions

which they see, and endow them with rich colors and gorgeous flowers of speech. The dying words of celebrated men show that death has no terror. Schiller's last words were: "I begin to see clearly in many things." Lord Collingwood, who died at sea during a violent storm, replied to a friend who asked him whether the rocking of the ship disturbed him: "Oh no, oh no; nothing can disturb me, for I am dying; and it will be a comfort to you, and to all those whom I love, to know how easily I die." The last words of Hunter, the celebrated English surgeon, were these: "If I only had a pen to write down how easy and comfortable it is to die!" There is something sublime in the death of the righteous.

On tombs we frequently see death represented as a hideous skeleton with a grinning countenance. That is a false and contradictory representation of death, and is likely to fill men with a horror of the last moment. You should rather represent him as a smiling angel who carries the spirit into the abode of immortality. That would be a true and lovely picture of the last moment. We also often find death represented as an angel with an upturned torch which is about to expire; it would be better to represent him as an angel upholding a flaming torch, as a true symbol of our awaking to a higher existence. On a tombstone in one of the churchyards of London there is the inscription: "The angel of death is the angel of eternal life."

Others will follow us after we are dead. The hearts of those who are now decaying in the churchyards once beat with joy and pain—happy and cheerful, sad and tormented hearts of men. And in a hundred years the plow goes over their graves, making its furrows and preparing the fields for the sower, and for the seed which produces food

for the living generation. Happy and cheerful men move over the ground under which the remains of their forefathers decay and fall to dust—coming and going, appearing and disappearing. *The immortal spirit alone remains forever.*

But how can we mortals represent to ourselves immortality? Scientists and naturalists presume that thousands and thousands of years ago a certain order of things must have existed ; but their conclusions have not been proved: they are only conclusions derived from what they actually see. Why should we not speculate upon the future from that which we feel and know at present? If scientists are at liberty to derive their theories from nature relating to the past, why should we not draw from present nature our theories relating to the future? The belief in God began to express itself by rude emblems, until it became gradually developed to a more spiritual view. The belief in immortality appears at first in ideas which are mixed up with our earthly life. We find it first in the idea of *transmigration of souls* between men and animals; then in the *resurrection of the body*, and finally in the *continuation of life either in heaven or in hell*, where joys or torments were represented in the same manner as they are felt by human beings. It was not until later times that the idea of immortality was developed in man into a more sublime representation—a purified existence, a spiritual continuation, after we have freed ourselves of all that is imperfect, of all that is connected with our earthly existence.

There is a prevailing idea among men that after they have left this earth they will find in the other world their friends who have departed before them, and will be received by them with open arms. It cannot be denied



that this idea is based upon the sacred feeling of love for those who have gone before us—an idea so beautiful and so poetical that it might be called an apotheosis of love; yet we must confess that this beautiful feeling carries within it a strong mixture of earthly selfishness. The belief in a continuation of our personal life and of a Christian heaven is inseparable from this view. It cannot be possible as soon as we have come to the conviction that our future life is a purely spiritual one, and that the idea of a Christian heaven is based on error.

But a superior, an infinitely more elevated conception of our spiritual existence is that of an entirely *impersonal* future life. We cannot imagine that, among the millions of heavenly bodies, our little earth, a mere atom in the universe, is alone inhabited by thinking beings. That would make our earth the centre of the universe—an idea which must be rejected as childish folly. But if we cannot doubt that there are heavenly bodies of superior condition to our own, it is necessary to come to the conclusion that they are inhabited by superior beings, according to the divine law of perpetual development.

The most perfect of beings which we can perceive with our senses is man. We cannot imagine anything that is above us; but we can imagine that superior and more perfect beings may exist—beings endowed with higher and more acute senses than those possessed by us in our bodies; beings of higher intellect and mind, who are able to comprehend better the wonders of existence, the wisdom and greatness of the Supreme Being, the connection of eternal truths and the blissfulness of life; better than we, who catch only a glimpse of the future, whilst the past is almost immediately lost in the ocean of oblivion.



Look at the millions of stars which crowd the heavens on a midsummer night, and which are figuratively called the dwellings of heaven. Are these not the abodes of those who once lived upon this earth, and who are now living a more spiritual and perfect life?

If we looked up to those stars, into those immeasurable distances, with devotion, to those lights which cheerfully brighten our earthly life, we would say to ourselves: Be of good cheer, believe and hope, for there are other worlds and other beings superior to those living on this little earth. There are other wonders of existence than those which you perceive to-day; other beings than you little men who call yourselves the lords of creation.

Kant said that it was unreasonable to believe that this little atom of an earth was the only one inhabited by reasonable beings. Laplace, the astronomer, says that it is unreasonable to suppose that the life-bearing matter on such a planet as Jupiter could be without fruit. Herschel thought it was not in accordance with science to imagine that man was the final aim of creation, and that the other bodies contained no other abodes for beings of a different kind. The greatest thinkers and scientists of all times have cherished the idea that, in those innumerable worlds which are shown to our eyes, order and law, life and feeling, must prevail. And if science, which is always striving after truth, recognizes this idea, should we not console ourselves over the loss of the Christian heaven?

It is a beautiful and true saying, "In my Father's house are many mansions;" and the transmigration of spirits from one star to another, from the good to the better, from the better to the best, is no improbable idea in a world where mortal man, tormented by errors, is per-

mitted to discover the supreme laws of nature; to discover worlds from the harmony which reigns throughout the universe.

If there are thinking beings in other worlds, then the idea is reasonable that the spirits of the universe must have a common center in the Great Spirit whom we worship as God. And immortality, in which we believe, is a development from step to step, until our spirit has reached perfection and becomes one with this Supreme Being.

We will cling to this joyful hope, this faith, this blissful conception of the sublime idea of immortality. And we shall carry this comforting thought with us—that our earthly life was not in vain, and that what our Spirit created here is not perishable; that the seed which we have sown here will not die, but live and bear fruit for generations to come.

“From Death arises still more precious Life!”

So says the poet; and his lofty word  
Is true and strong as is the word of God.  
It finds an easy door to every heart,  
And breathes of immortality to man.  
With this conception, man cannot believe  
That, though his mortal frame to ruin fall,  
His spirit too will vanish into naught,  
In dark annihilation lost and gone.

So man, nature and science join to teach  
That nothing vanishes which once had birth.  
The form may change: the inner being lives;  
The germ, the living force, must still survive.  
And, as man's mortal frame doth change and pass,  
But never vanishes, so does his spirit  
But pass, and not expire.

For, since no thing can perish in its germ,  
Man's spirit *cannot* die. It still *must* live.  
Eternal life is his. The sun may fade,  
And hoary Time may totter with his years;  
Still, fresh and fair, man's *life of life* remains.  
The stars will pass away, but in man's soul  
The star of immortality will shine  
From life to life, a luminous intelligence,  
Forever and forever.

## PERTAINING TO MORALITY.

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I inscribe the following pages with the words, "Pertaining to Morality," in order to indicate that it is not my intention to give a complete description of a system of morality, but merely to give the reader my views and experiences, which have been gathered during the many years of my long life, during a close observation of the lives of individuals, families and nations.

What is the meaning of morality of life? It is religion carried into practical life—the theory of belief carried into execution in our actions and deeds, and applied to further the welfare of ourselves and our fellow-creatures. Virtuous actions are entirely independent of ecclesiastical dogmas; and as there is only one sun which shines for all life upon earth, there can be only *one* system of morality which applies to all nations that have been reached by civilization, no matter how much they may differ from each other in language, opinions, education, laws or customs. Human nature is everywhere the same, as is also our conscience, which judges our actions. Moral freedom, which is the gift of man alone, is that vital distinction which elevates him above all other beings. The animal follows blindly its instinct, and cannot escape from its influence and power; but man possesses freedom of will: he can and must deliberate before he acts; he must fight against his evil, sensual inclinations; he must follow the commands of his reason and conscience. He who obeys these laws leads a moral life.

Every being is subject to the temptations of his senses; and he must watch them carefully, that they may not become a torment to his conscience. If reason and conscience are victorious in the struggle with sensuality, virtue is the result of their victory. For this reason, a man who is not possessed of strong sensual inclinations or passions, and who leads a regulated and moral life, cannot be called a virtuous man as much as he who is less fortunately constituted, but who has won the victory over his sensuality and passion.

We possess certain inclinations which are, in many instances, based upon our physical condition, which, by education, example and surroundings in our childhood and youth, may be developed for good or for evil. If these physical conditions, education and surroundings are favorable to lead us to virtue, we are less exposed to temptation than others in whom these favorable conditions do not prevail. But we should never consider a man belonging to the first-named category as an example of virtue and morality, nor condemn and treat with cruel contempt the other. He who is fortunate enough to possess these favorable physical and intellectual gifts, and has enjoyed the privilege of a good education and example, may indeed be praised as happy.

Every man should make it a duty to keep a bridle on his inclinations and passions. He who becomes their toy falls from one extreme and exalted condition into another. But this state of mind devours us, consumes our inner life, and robs us of the peace of mind, cheerfulness and contentment which are absolutely necessary to a happy life.

We should always do our best to subdue the lower inclinations of our nature to the more spiritual ones, and

thus become more conscious of the pure and perfect image of moral individuality. In other words, we should always strive to become better.

He who honestly strives to obtain contentment and true happiness will not seek them in sensual pleasures, in dissipation and wild passions, but in a cheerful, gratifying spiritual life. This alone can enable us to do our duty, to apply ourselves to our business, to enjoy social life, not to be weary in doing good, to tolerate the faults of others, to bear misfortune quietly and with courage, and to be moderate in the enjoyment of the pleasures of this life. The life of a good man is a struggle, a continual struggle, between duty and pleasure, and also between conflicting duties. A degraded man no longer attempts to fight; but even the good is sometimes conquered. Therefore, continual watchfulness is required; for even the slightest relaxation will lead us farther from the right path than we at first imagine.

“Why have I done what I ought not to have done, and what I did not want to do? What is the cause of this inclination and that taste being too powerful within me? How can I fight against them and counterbalance them?” These are the questions which a man, under such circumstances, generally puts to himself. And a man who takes counsel with himself in this serious and conscientious manner will not fail to receive a satisfactory reply. He will take new courage; and thus the fault which he has committed may lead him even to reach a higher standard of morality, and to obtain true happiness.

It should be the care of every moment of our life to act righteously. That is our own interest, as well as that of the community; for the actions of the individual, even of

the most degraded and insignificant, reflect upon others and become a model for others. We need not detail here how quickly and injuriously evil examples act upon others—how they lead the weak away from the right path. Man is generally weakest where he thinks himself strongest. He who flees temptation is the true hero, not he who consciously throws himself into its way, to gain the garland of virtue before he has begun the fight.

Virtue does not require reward; it cannot be bought and it cannot be paid; it expects no remuneration; it finds its reward in the consciousness of doing right and of fulfilling its duty. And he who finds good in this, will also find encouragement for doing more; he who endeavors faithfully to follow the dictates of his conscience, feels an increase of desire and power to become a still better man.

Our conscience is the mother and our freedom the father of virtue. Where virtue dwells, happiness abides also; but misery and physical poverty reign where virtue has no home.

In order to lead a righteous life, we must have firmly established principles and an energetic character. Unfortunately, the majority of men have no convictions or principles, but only opinions; and this is why many pass through their lives helpless and purposeless. They are moved to and fro, and in every direction, like a slender reed when touched by the breath of the wind; they exist without consulting their reason and their conscience. Weakness of character and absence of principles cause as much mischief in the world as actual depravity. It is the duty of a man of character not only to avoid all wrong and evil, but to prevent it in others, and impress them



with the dignity and earnestness of justice and virtue. He who tolerates wrong encourages it. Men of character are the gold, men without character the mean, and often the counterfeit, coin of humanity.

Many men excuse themselves by saying that they have been *compelled* to do wrong; but compulsion is a word that should not be found in the vocabulary of a man. No true man can be compelled to do anything which goes against his conscience and his wish.

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*Love and marriage.*—What happiness, what blissfulness, lie in these two words! Love is a flower which blossoms in every clime, which neither the ice of the north nor the tropical sun can kill. At all times love has inspired poets with their most beautiful songs, and long after we have been forgotten hymns of love will resound—as long as man lives upon earth.

But what misery lies also in these two words! How many marriages have been concluded without the right basis, without genuine, true and mutual love! It frequently happens that marriage is concluded after a superficial, short acquaintance, in a moment of rising passion or sensuality; and, particularly in this country, it happens that young people who have scarcely passed the age of childhood have entered into the contract of marriage without consulting their parents, or in defiance of their objection, as if parents had no concern in the welfare of their children. The wrong which children commit by such an action is only too frequently avenged by subsequent unfortunate marriages. The blessing of the parents, or a warning word of their love, would have prevented such a misfortune.

We often hear the expression from thoughtless people that marriage is nothing but a civil contract. This is certainly the case in all civilized countries; but this contract is not less holy than that which has been sanctioned by the Church. The State has an interest in, and the right to protect, the purity of marriage, and to issue laws for that purpose. But the mere fulfillment of these laws, when the officer of the law has declared the young man and the young woman to be man and wife, does not really complete the act of marriage. Matrimony is the basis of morality, and its celebration does not end with the wedding-day: it must be of perpetual duration, a feast of souls as long as husband and wife live. But not only the State of which we are the citizens has an interest in marriage, but all humanity; for every new marriage ought to be a sanctuary of domestic happiness, in which the song of songs, of love, is chanted.

Such a marriage will be a happy one; husband and wife will meet in their wishes and desires; and, when wisdom decides and love yields, there can be no contention. A woman who loves her husband will at all times try to follow his just and reasonable wishes; and a man who loves his wife will not consider her as his inferior or as his superior. He will honor and protect her, guide her, and respect her feelings. Every heart longs for this holy, protecting love which never wavers in all changes of life, but is strengthened as years go on, and remains the same in sickness and in health, in youth and in age, in good and bad fortune.

A woman should choose only such a husband as will be to her a loving friend, counselor, protector and guide. Her love should not be sold for gold and splendor; nor should she care for personal beauty. All these are perish-

able, and will be found wanting in the hour of trial, which is sure to come. Purity of heart, nobility of soul, and constancy, should be the basis of her affection. And the man, in the choice of his wife, should be actuated only by the purest motives, excluding all selfishness. Only the affinity of the two souls should give the decision. It is a wonderful, sublime and holy law of nature which attracts two beings to each other, so that by this union new beings may be created. Yes, thou art holy, for thou hast been chosen to fulfill a high and sublime duty—the continuation of the work which that power penetrating and vivifying the universe, God's love, began on earth in times past, far beyond all human memory. This mighty sexual desire penetrates the entire living world, from the little insect upon the blade of grass up to man. Thou art the herald of a self-conscious, divine will, which is manifested in the creation of every form of life and in the propagation of it. This desire has an indisputable right: wherever the present life decays and dies a new generation must arise. The enjoyment and the work of life should always fill our earth. Sexual love and the law of sexual connection are as holy as the institution of any natural law; but if you allow this desire to become predominant, if you place it above intellect and conscience, you will sink lower and lower and lose all manly dignity.

An animal is an animal, and is not intended for higher purposes. The sexual instinct reigns within it with full force, yet only at certain periods; therefore it is not unlimited. With the exception of the regular period of pairing, this instinct is dormant in the brute creation. There are also limits placed to man's desire—intellect and chastity. They are given to him as a warning, when this

desire awakens in him, that he may not sink to the level of a beast. Chastity must accompany a man into his married life, so that it may be worthy of human beings. Whichever of the two loses chastity, loses also the respect of the other. But respect is the foundation of marriage as well as of love, and, without respect and esteem, love cannot be lasting; they must walk hand in hand. Neither man nor woman should for one moment forget the mutual respect which they owe each other. They should not forget that each one has a claim upon the other's esteem, and if this is not asserted, the one cannot wonder at the loss of the love and esteem of the other.

Uhlich has said the following excellent words in one of his writings: "Man, with his superior physical power, possesses, naturally, a stronger desire for the activity of life; the woman's constitution is more suitable for the quieter work in a narrower circle. Man feels more inclined to judge circumstances and conditions with his reason; woman with her feelings. These are not contrasts which exclude one another. Intellect and feeling are human gifts; activity, in a narrow as well as a wider circle, is human vocation. In distinguishing the two sexes we can only speak of the preponderance of the one over the other; and it is a great blessing of well-regulated marriages when such a beautiful exchange takes place. It will do good to a man when his reason is modified by the woman's feeling; and likewise will it be well for the woman if her sentiments receive clearness and modification by the assistance of the man.

"Man shall gather, and woman shall preserve. Man shall enter into the struggle of life; woman shall quietly work and govern at home. When the husband's heart is

heavy with bitterness and sorrow on account of worldly affairs, he shall find a resting-place on the faithful bosom of his wife; and when the woman feels depressed by her little cares, she shall cling to the strong man. Man shall work for justice and truth; woman shall nurture the beautiful; and she can do this, even under the most humble conditions, by observing in her household decency and good manners, order and cleanliness. At all times husband and wife should be in the most intimate connection, inwardly and outwardly. Thus they will always feel joined to each other more closely; they will oblige each other more than ever; they will improve each other, and their marriage will be a blessing.

“The children which are born to them will fasten the bond still more closely. They will inspire them with new strength to perform those duties which their bond has already imposed upon them. To gain, and to preserve, and to keep in order, to strive after righteousness, to avoid evil, to agree upon that which is good, becomes now their increased duty. Care and anxiety have increased with this duty, and joy and pleasures also. It is one of the most blissful feelings of which the human heart is capable when, for the first time, the mother puts her new-born child to her breast; when the father lifts it up, and the thought fills his heart, ‘This is *my* child.’ The idea that dear human creatures are gathered round father and mother, from whom they have to learn how to become good and virtuous, will be an increased impulse for the two to live in perfect harmony and confidence with each other, to exchange their thoughts, to cling to each other in everything that is good and just, pure and noble. In such families there reigns a gentle, simple, pure, sweet joy; there is

comfort from the vexations of the world, and, at the same time, they are the source from which flow the welfare of communities and the prosperity of nations, which join finally as a beautiful river. A well-conducted family is the best preparation for every larger communion."

In order to lead a perfectly happy married life, both parties must be animated with the most earnest desire to make each other happy; then alone they can and will be happy. Young married people should not forget that, however good and honorable they may be, neither of them is without weakness and faults; and it should be their most earnest desire to avoid them. No happy marriage can exist without this earnest desire. A soulful look, a brief word, suffice to awaken love; but we must strive to preserve it. Not a day nor an hour goes by without opportunities to deserve love. With thousands of little trifles a man can prove to his wife how much he cares for her; and she, on the other hand, can make her home so happy that he feels comfortable only there.

Neither of them should impose restrictions upon the other, but should respect each other's personal liberty. There are many husbands who continually find fault with their wives, and give orders and make demands which assume a character of patronage; and women are likely to fall into the same error. Nothing is more likely to disturb their peace than such conduct.

Passion and a violent temper are only too frequently the source of unhappiness between husband and wife. But we have the power within us to master our temper; and nowhere should this duty be more strictly observed than between husband and wife. People of violent temper set a bad example to their children; and the consequence has



been that the children have also grown up subject to passion and violence. Children of such unions, who see hatred and contention where love and harmony should reign, suffer from the evil consequences of such bad examples, which have an evil effect upon them in every way; for it is the natural and unconquerable desire of children to follow the example of their parents.

Married people should never forget that family life is a sacred institution which is intended to contribute to the improvement of mankind; on the other hand, the degradation of family life undermines the very foundation of society and of humanity.

For some years past an agitation has been set on foot to work for what is called the emancipation of women. The promoters of this movement maintain that the position which women occupy to-day is undignified and subordinate. They demand that this alleged evil be remedied by granting to women all political and social rights and privileges which hitherto have belonged to man alone.

This would be no improvement or elevation of the condition of women, but rather a degradation. It is the duty of the woman to preserve the sanctity and dignity of the household and the family; and she should be protected against anything that is likely to bring her into contact with that which is not perfectly pure, with that which is rude and brutal. Public life belongs to man; the woman's blissful activity should be confined to the sanctity of the household, to the education of the rising generation.

God has evidently made woman to be the *fixed* point in the continual motion of the world; and woe be to the nation which makes her the *moving* element! It will always be tossed about on the waves of life like a ship with-



out rudder or anchor, and will never reach the longed-for harbor.

Another party has arisen of late years which is in favor of total suspension of marriage, the so-called party of "Free Love." According to the teachings of this party, marriages are to be dissolved as soon as mutual affection and love have ceased to exist. But, in the eyes of these people, what is the meaning of the word love? Certainly not that sublime feeling which unites two human hearts, but only a vulgar and entirely sensual sentiment, which degrades such a union to the level of prostitution. But, by such flagrant abuse between the sexes, the great moral institution of marriage would be annihilated; there would be no more actual marriages, and *no more families*. In the history of mankind there are not wanting warning examples which show how low a nation must invariably fall which ruthlessly destroys the sacred bonds of family life. In olden times, as well as in our own, the demoralization of society has destroyed as many states as have been ruined by the sword of the conqueror and the blast of war. Marriage and the family will remain for all time the foundation of the social virtues of a nation.

Melendez Valdez de Mendieta, a Spaniard, and a high officer of justice in 1798, expressed himself as follows: "A terrible instance of selfishness: Forgetfulness of the most serious duties, contempt of the most sacred obligations which the bonds of matrimony impose upon us, threaten a revolution and the dissolution of society. The inclination to celibacy has become a habit, and encourages adultery among women. Our perverse mind makes us more and more indifferent toward an institution which is the foundation of all social order. The young men pretend

that they cannot afford to support a wife—a shallow excuse, which is only supported by the increase of luxury and dissipation, and which only deprives many of the holiest and sweetest comfort which upholds man in his struggles on the thorny path of this life.”

How true, and how applicable to our own time, are these words, spoken a hundred years ago!

Let us once more return to the consummation of marriage. How many unhappy marriages have been contracted in the most reckless manner! Man and wife live together for a short time, until the intoxication of passion has passed by; and with this intoxication the illusions which they have formed disappear also. They learn to know each other, and come to the conclusion that they have made a mistake. In the place of this first intoxication, the cold, stern reality appears before them—an unhappy marriage. In such a case the two people either live side by side without a warmer interest in each other, or they make use of every available remedy to free themselves from the fetters of married life; and they do not even shrink from crime in order to find such means.

Such a marriage, which has been thoughtlessly and recklessly contracted, has always been followed by wretchedness, misery and despair. It has driven many men to dissipation and drunkenness; it has made lazy vagabonds of them, and they have ended their unhappy lives in prison. How many honest young women have been driven by such a marriage into the arms of vice, and have sunk lower and lower, until they have ended their miserable lives in a river! The history of unhappy marriages is of a revolting nature; and the number of divorces increases in the same ratio as unhappy marriages, as I have

proved by figures in the chapter, "Has Christianity Made Mankind Better?"

In many civilized countries in the world, the government puts no obstacles in the way of forming reckless marriages; yet the dissolution of such marriages is always made a matter of difficulty, and this practice has really encouraged immorality and misery. The canonical law has established the impossibility of divorce as a main principle. Many other governments have partly followed this policy. The State of New York recognizes adultery as the only reason for divorce, and has thus acknowledged the degrading view that the sexual part of matrimony, and not the ideal, is the most important. Thus it is decreed that married people, even if they are altogether unfit to live with each other, and have no love for each other, should become *hypocrites*, should sham love until the end of their lives, but, in truth, live at enmity with each other and set a bad example to the children. Thus the bond of love which maintains marriage is destroyed; and when the inward, spiritual communion has ceased to exist, all other connection should be dissolved also.

Nor should a dissolution of marriage take place without mature deliberation. If married people discover that they are not suited to each other, they should not think at once of divorce. Mutual good-will can smooth much that appears rough. Those who have joined their hands for a love for life, should not trifle recklessly with such holy pledges. If only the heart of one is full of love, the heart of the other may be gained in time; and, if children are involved, separation becomes an unnatural and pitiable condition. All this should be well taken into consideration, and the words of Jesus, "Love ye one another," not

forgotten. Love does not seek its own; it is not selfish: it is long-suffering and kind. *Love conquers everything.*

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What I have said above of love and marriage is most intimately connected with that which fills the hearts of parents—namely, *children and their education*, a most blissful, but also most responsible duty. Man is born with different gifts; but all are only germs which may grow fruitful or sterile, to a shaded or leafless, a nourishing or poisonous tree. And what develops these germs, which at first appear as nothing, and which may grow into everything? Education. What nurses them when they first shoot forth? what waters the young plant in want of nourishment, so that it may not perish under the burning sun of life? Education. What prevents the weeds from smothering the young plant? Education. Thus education rests solely with the parents. The school may assist; but what it can do is not sufficient. The chief purpose of the school is instruction in those branches of learning which are necessary in our life. The principal part of education is at home, in that soul-life which joins parents and their children, which makes each one sympathize with the joys and griefs of the other.

The principal fault of the education of our time, which has caused much harm, is the circumstance that only the head, and not the heart, has been educated. But, to make honest and upright people, head and heart, spirit and feelings, should be cultured at the same time. Religion is the principal motor for the education of the mind and the heart, for all that is noble and good. It is upon this feeling that the education of a child should be based, because

this phase of spiritual life is earlier and more intensely developed than the other faculties of the mind. A child has no clear ideas of what is good and evil, no reliable judgment of right and wrong; but that feeling which is rooted in the innate love of the child to its parents is all the more intense; and education is not right if it does not appeal to this noble sentiment. The child is still defective in knowledge, its eyes are still dimmed; but these defects are covered by a youthful enthusiasm for truth and a thirst for knowledge; and he who neglects to avail himself of these sentiments for the guidance of the child, loses the strongest influence for its welfare.

Religion stands at the head of the means of education, for the aim of all human culture lies in religion. All spiritual powers of man—sentiment, knowledge and will—are concentrated in this; and here man is represented in his most perfect form. The constantly improving knowledge of the divine, of the supremely beautiful, pure and good, is the highest aim of our spiritual nature, as is shown in its own constitution. The most beautiful harmony exists in its endeavors and effects. The more our powers of knowledge are cultivated, the more we feel the growth of love and truth within us, and the more actively work all those desires within us which relate to knowledge. If this feeling is directed toward that goal which is before us—to be united with all men by the love of God—then it cannot do without the guidance of intellect and reason; and it employs not only these faculties of the soul, but all others which strive after knowledge, and creates within us a desire to realize that in which man rejoices.

Knowledge, feeling and desire are one in religion. This is not the case in any science or art. No object of

knowledge and ability taxes so much the activity of our spirit and our heart, requires so completely the exercise of all our powers, as religion. And our soul rises to God in full harmony with all the feelings of our heart.

Without religion the moral sense is deprived of its most active power. Our intentions never become facts which have conquered all impediments if we have no help and support in religion, if the voice of our conscience is not acknowledged as God's own sacred word, and if true love of God, the Almighty and All-loving, does not induce us to steadfast well-doing. Religion, therefore, must be the basis of all education; but we should remember that religion does not exist in ecclesiastical dogmatism—not in the belief in miracles and supernatural things, but only in the belief in one Supreme Being, in God, and in the love of God and of our fellow-creatures. Many people are of the opinion that children should be educated according to the unreasonable dogmas of the Church. They think that when they have grown up, and have begun to think for themselves, they will cast aside these dogmas and form their own opinions. That will surely be the case. But what shall we say of a gardener who tries to bend a little tree that is growing up straight, in hopes that it will get right again by itself? The little tree, as soon as it has regained its liberty, will certainly reassume its natural form; but the traces of the violence which has been done to it will remain.

Parents who do not belong to the Church from conviction, but allow their children to be educated in the belief of mysteries and dogmas, which have nothing to do with true religion, under the impression that they will free themselves and find the true way, do them great harm,



and lead them into a state of doubt and uneasiness, and expose them to the danger of losing their belief in God when they reject the belief in dogmas, and of being left without help and guidance in this world. If children are taught to assume as a sacred truth what in after life, with matured scientific education, proves to be a falsehood, we cast a doubt into their souls which may have the most fatal consequences, and which is sure to lead these unfortunates into a state of misery. Such contradictions are the cause of fearful struggles in the hearts of men, and have a fatal influence on their minds. The carelessness of youth throws away all belief in higher things for that very reason. Thousands of these live thus until they reach mature manhood, and then gain the knowledge that they have been in error and have strayed from the right path. They will have to endure a hard fight to find their way out of the dense wood of doubt and contradictions, to gain the road which leads to contentment and peace of mind. Many have perished miserably in this struggle; and their brutal treatment of all that is noble and sublime has had a destructive influence on others. Others have lost their reason by brooding over the dogmas of the Church, and have become inmates of insane asylums. And many who have rejected the belief in God with the belief in dogmas, sway helplessly to and fro, fall into crimes, and have to finish in a prison the education which their parents neglected. Therefore, ye parents, take care what you are about before it is too late, and do not forget for one moment the great responsibility which rests upon your shoulders. Teach your children to cling to the belief of one Supreme Being; teach them to love God and their neighbors; and they will become righteous men, who will give you



joy, and of whom you may be proud in your gratitude to God.

We hear everywhere complaints of the deplorable increase of crime ; but what is the inner cause of this sad fact ? Nothing else than bad education. Take this to heart, ye parents. It depends upon you whether your children shall become good and honest men, or evil-doers and criminals. It depends upon you whether the future generation will present the degrading spectacle of crowded prisons, with increase of crime in all directions, or whether it will be a generation of better men.

But children should be actually educated : the mere attainment of reading, writing, arithmetic, and general knowledge, does not make good men. The moral education must do all—the culture and development of our moral power. Sealsfield, in one of his writings, says : “ What is it that makes shrewd, world-wise people, and what is it that makes wise, good and noble men ? Among a hundred children who visit the same school, who are instructed by the same master, who come from parents of equally good standing, there are not ten of the same disposition and the same qualities of mind. Their intelligence and their knowledge may be the same, but not their character. That is not formed in a public school, but is developed at home by father and mother. That gentle greeting in the morning, the kiss which awakens the child from its slumber ; the loving look and the kind word which admonish it to work ; the flower which it receives from the mother ; the walk which it takes in her company,—all these form the character and mind of the child.” The love of father and mother is the educator which God has given us ; the younger the child, the more

it stands in need of the mother's love. It takes refuge with her when it is in fear: when it seizes her knee and hides its face in her lap, it thinks that it is safe. And even the grown-up man, who has to endure the struggle of life, yet still has the happiness of having his mother, knows that in her heart he finds a refuge from the hard, rude world. And the mother preserves her love for her child, even if it has grown to manhood or womanhood, and has also become a father or mother. In her faithful heart we find still the old, mild, true, unchangeable love. There we find still a bosom on which the grown-up son or daughter can weep out their sorrows and cares. Oh! it is a precious treasure, a faithful mother's heart. Can there be people who, having been brought up by a mother's love, can ever forget it? Surely not!

I have frequently had opportunities of observing parents in their manner toward their children, and often have experienced the most sincere pleasure. But I have also often seen with pain that many parents, however careful they may have been of the physical welfare of their children, yet have neglected the best part of their education, the formation of their character. They have allowed them to grow up without impressing them with the duty of obedience; and when they have had cause to blame them, they have done so in the wrong way—with scolding, hard words, and even with blows. The first of these faults, the disregard of obedience, makes of these children men who will despise laws and manners, neglect the duty they owe to their parents, and even become criminals. The other method of education—scolding, hard words and blows—can result only in estranging the children from their parents and making them lose their

love for them. But if children have once lost their love, they can never become good men, for love alone is able to make good men. Show your children in words and deeds a good example; impress them from early childhood with the difference between good and evil; teach them that God's fatherly eye watches over them at all times; teach them to love truth, and not to be guilty of falsehood even in the most trifling matter. See that they meet only with children of good manners, not with those whose parents are not upright and honorable people; educate them to strict observance of your commands; do not suffer disobedience; for obedience and love of truth are the most powerful helpers of education. But all this do *with* love and *by* love; not as if you were your children's masters and they your slaves, but in such a manner *that they may recognize your love at all times, and in everything* which you do and say. When you are compelled to blame them, do not use harsh words: they will wound the children's hearts, and harden them, and turn them away from you. Reprimand them with kindness and calmness; try to convince them, so that even if you blame them they will consider you their best friends. Woe be to you, and to your children, if by cruel and harsh treatment they lose their love for you! Love alone—but not that criminal love which the ape has for its young—is the true educator. Children who have been educated in true, faithful love will reward their parents with love until the end of their days. They will always endeavor to please them; they will become good and upright men; and when they have become fathers or mothers themselves, they will never lose their love for their parents.

Mothers, do not seek your happiness in finery and pleasures, but in intercourse with your children and in care for their welfare. Fathers, do not get into the habit of spending your evenings away from your family, leaving your wife and children to themselves. Your place is in your home, where you may assist your children in their work, teach them and entertain them, and accustom them from their early youth to the happiness of home-life. God has given you great happiness and blessings with your children; but he has also imposed upon you heavy responsibilities. Do not forget that your children are immortal beings, with whose welfare you are entrusted, and whom you have to educate to be upright and useful men.

Teaching and good example are necessary conditions in the education of youth; but they do not suffice alone. A careful attention to the life which children growing up lead outside of their home is of as great importance, if you wish to educate them to become good men. Temptation of every kind is placed in the path of youth, and deprives them of the fruits of the education they have received at home. This is what fills the parental heart with grief and crowds the prisons with evil-doers. Children should be educated to independence; but we should be careful to avoid prematurity—the licentiousness of an unscrupulous young class of society, which becomes a curse to the family and to the country. The youth of our day are only too much inclined to rush into the whirlpool of dissipation which ruins property, honor and manly dignity. In many families such a desire for pleasure is encouraged, or at least tolerated. It is the duty of parents to fight against this inordinate love of pleasure, or we shall see a genera-

tion arise which, unaccustomed to labor, lives only for enjoyment, and is incapable of fulfilling its duties toward the family and the State.

It is our duty to develop in young people the feeling of self-consciousness and self-respect; but we should be careful not to go too far, lest they degenerate into a want of respect toward their parents and toward others. If we destroy idealism in young minds, we are in danger of destroying respect to their parents and the veneration which they owe to God; and the life of the soul of a young man, which ought to be like that of a blooming garden, becomes a barren waste. Whenever the aim of the parents is bent upon the education of independent beings, and they let love be the chief power in their attempt, the feeling of devotion in the child will change into one of lifelong friendship for its parents.

With the feeling of self-esteem and self-respect that of self-command should keep equal pace; for that reason the child should be accustomed from early youth to obey the commands of its parents, who are its natural guardians and greatest benefactors. He who has not learned to obey in his youth, will never understand how to act with kindness and consideration toward others; he will feel unhappy himself, and, being a slave of his self-will and selfishness, will become a tyrant over those who surround him.

The education of youth is not always an easy task, but it can be alleviated if we consider that obedience and truthfulness are the cardinal virtues which are the foundation of all education. By insisting upon obedience, and by the invariable observance of truth, parents show the most sincere love to their children. It will be difficult sometimes to refuse the wish of a beloved child, yet it

must be done if the child desires what is not good. Calmness, friendliness and determination are the means by which cheerful obedience can be obtained; on the other hand, great carefulness in commanding or forbidding should be observed. That which is not necessary should never be required, but what has been once commanded should be strictly enforced. It may be of use to ourselves and to the child to give reasons for our command, but these should not be given until after they have been obeyed.

We should pay particular attention to the cultivation of truthfulness; but too much confidence in the veracity of a child may be as dangerous as want of confidence. We should not forget that it requires a certain strength of character and intellect always to speak the truth. A child may easily make a mistake without the intention of telling a falsehood; and in such a case we should not evince disbelief, but rather try to investigate the truth by calm and friendly means. The character of a child is a delicately strung instrument, which easily gets out of tune when it is rudely touched.

A very important factor in the education of children is the class of literature which is placed in their hands. Many of our modern educators have had serious doubts whether the reading of fairy tales is of advantage to young children, because they bring before the child untrue narratives, while all education ought to be based upon truth. But there are so many other good books besides the literature of fairy tales, that it is really not difficult to find appropriate reading for our children; and for the grown-up young people there exists a very rich literature in every language. But it is not intended that our children should always sit brooding over books. They ought not to

develop their intellect only, but also their body; for a healthy mind can exist only in a healthy body. In the choice of games and other occupations we should have in view useful purposes for future life. We should avoid, above all, all games of a military tendency. We should stifle in the child every inclination to deeds of violence and the wholesale murder of war. The love for a soldier's life which is developed by these games, even as a play, has a demoralizing effect, and should be suppressed rather than encouraged. The boy should be taught that peace, not war, makes men happy; and that in private life, as well as in the life of nations, all difficulties ought to be settled in a peaceful way. And we should not put books in their hands which glorify war, but books which, by the representation of lives of heroes of intellect and mind, have brought blessings to all generations. These will elevate the character of youth and contribute to the making of good men and good citizens. Finally, there is one thing, my dear reader, which I would wish most seriously to impress upon your heart—namely, the preservation of the mother tongue in your family, no matter to what nationality you belong. Our mother tongue is the beautiful bond which unites us to our own country, no matter in what land we may live; and this bond should never be severed, for patriotism is a sacred sentiment. Therefore, insist upon making the mother tongue the language of your household. These are the sounds with which your mother greeted you when you first entered life, the language in which your father spoke to you when he first pressed you to his heart. Cherish this language; and if that of the country in which you live with your family is a strange one, it has its full importance in business life;



yet let the mother tongue, at all times, be the language of your home and a sacred object in your household.

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Life has many varieties. There are educated and uneducated people, rich and poor; people who are in need of the assistance and help of others, and others who gain a livelihood by supplying this help and assistance. From this circumstance arises the relation between masters and servants. Everybody has found out that good servants contribute to the happiness and peace of life. In order to establish a happy relationship, both parties should do their duty—servants, by a faithful fulfillment of their tasks; and masters, who are the more educated of the two, ought to have more control over themselves than the less educated. And if it cannot be denied that servants sometimes leave much to be desired, it cannot be denied that masters often are the cause of an unpleasant relation. In all circumstances of life, mutual respect among those who live together is a most urgent necessity; and, in this instance, masters should set a good example by trying to gain the confidence and esteem of their servants. The esteem of servants cannot be gained by domineering and overbearing manners, but only by kindness and justice. Where these are practiced the servants will show respect and, what is worth more, affection. Masters desire obedience and punctuality; but they should make this obedience easy for the servants, and give their orders in a friendly and kind spirit. And we should try not to order too much. Many kindhearted people have the weakness to blame too much, and to express their discontent at every little mistake. By this they make themselves dissatisfied and embitter the lives of servants. A servant of good character who is con-

tinually being found fault with becomes indifferent and careless; while another whose disposition is not a friendly one will become irritated and obstinate, and do his work in a careless manner, merely to annoy his master. Where the masters are kind and just, the relations between themselves and their servants will generally be satisfactory for both parties. There will be no cross or overbearing demands on the one side, and no slavish obedience on the other. When masters and servants meet each other with good-will, there will be no appearance of condescension, which can only hurt the servant. The relationship between masters and servants must be humane, and based upon mutual respect.

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Of all the evil passions which have enslaved men, *egotism* is the vilest and most dangerous. It is the rotten fruit on the tree of mankind; it is the main cause of all wrong, all wickedness, all depravity, all baseness, and all misery which poison the lives of families and nations. The egotist may gather riches, heap up golden treasures, or carry a crown, but he will not gain love and respect. Love and selfishness are in a constant struggle in the hearts of men, and love ought always to be victorious. If selfishness gets the upper hand, man does that which is not righteous; but if love conquers, he becomes virtuous. It is a blissful feeling when we have freed ourselves from the chains of egotism, when we leave the gloomy solitude, and by active love make ourselves the center of a grateful circle of men. What applies to family life affects also the lives of nations. In order to destroy the root of the evil which devours mankind, we must overcome selfishness, which is the most injurious active spring of life. The

principles of justice, brotherhood and active love, which have been disregarded by the rulers as well as by the ruled, must be elevated to become the ruling principle of public and private life.

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We hear a great deal of talk about the commands of *honor*. What is the meaning of this word honor? We hear of military honor, of commercial honor, of the honor of nobility, of Christian honor, of woman's honor, workingman's honor, etc. Almost every grade of social position claims for itself a special kind of honor. Many of those who lay particular stress upon this honor, and believe it to be hurt by a word even spoken in jest, think they are obliged to demand satisfaction, and take recourse to deeds of violence, which are always dishonorable. And this is supposed to be required by honor; this is supposed to satisfy an offence. What absurd and pitiful ideas! The honor of man consists solely in right-doing, and all different conceptions of the term are mere bubbles, and are not worthy of the attention of an upright man. True honor is inviolable; it cannot be injured, and is not in want of satisfaction.

Many consider titles and decorations an honor, and there are men who really desire them and rejoice in them. Can such trifles endow us with honor? We have seen many men of high title, with their breasts covered with decorations, who have been the scourge of their fellow-creatures. There was a time when school-children received medals for application and good behavior, without considering that this could only awaken evil qualities within them. This folly has fortunately been abandoned in

recent times, and the children are rewarded with useful gifts, such as books. These titles and decorations are really nothing else than the medals which are given to school-children. They are toys which only serve to make men vain and to elevate themselves in their opinion above their fellow-creatures. A man who is conscious of his own dignity is not in want of decorations and titles. A certain Mr. Enszt received, in 1873, a decoration from a German prince, which he returned with the words: "He who possesses no inward dignity cannot receive it by orders and decorations; and he who does possess it needs not an outward testimonial." That man was perfectly right. All these decorations ought to be rejected; they only serve to flatter men's vanity, and are a means which autocrats use to gain and preserve followers. By the acceptance of an order of decoration a free man makes himself the subject of a ruler; but every thinking man, to whom liberty and independence are something more than hollow words, will never consent to accept such a decoration, which would make him a servant to the will of somebody else. Only weaklings and fools will attach any value to these trifles.

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*The last honor.*—When a person has died, the notice in the papers concerning his death is frequently found to contain a request to pay the "last honor" to the departed dead by accompanying his body to its last resting-place. But how can "honor" be paid to a dead person by the fact that a number of people follow his coffin, the more so as among such followers there are frequently many who took no especial interest in the deceased while he was still

among the living, and even some who were his opponents, causing him anxiety and trouble while in the flesh? It is not "tributes of honor" that ought to accompany us to the grave, nothing that reminds of vanity, like outward show, but the love which our deeds have planted in the hearts of our fellow-men. Honor, bare honor, we can neither give to nor take from him who lies in his coffin. He should have been personally possessed of that quality while still among us. Furthermore: Is there not an amount of self-conceit contained in the belief that *we* can "honor" a dead man by following his body to its final resting-place?

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Men frequently consider themselves offended by each other, and in all countries innumerable contentions and lawsuits are the result. What is the meaning of an offence? Manifestations and expressions of want of esteem. But want of esteem can hurt only him who by his actions has not been able to gain respect. A well-known author said that if somebody accused him of having stolen a silver spoon, he would not even raise his eyes if it were not true. That is a very sound principle; for he who utters a baseless accusation does no harm to him against whom it is directed, but only to himself, by making himself a slanderer. There can be no question of a real offence; but he who *intends* such a one should be punished in as severe a manner as he who makes an attack upon the life of a fellow-man; for one's fair name is worth as much as life itself.

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The *love of truth* is one of the bases of self-contentment, as well as of the respect which we demand from others. The highest object of our life is the search after truth,

and the love of truth is our supreme happiness ; it teaches us to live and act righteously. Truth is always self-evident and harmonious in itself, and can never be contradicted. An untruth is uncertain, incoherent, and full of contradictions, leading from one inconsistency to another. Truth makes a good impression at once ; an untruth, no matter how cleverly it is uttered, will arouse at once suspicion. Truth is that sacred standard of our morality which nobody can violate without degrading his own dignity. A man whose love for truth is not above doubt is at once looked upon with suspicion, no matter how superior may be his gifts of intellect. For we never know whether he speaks truth or falsehood, whether he uses his words for our benefit or for our disadvantage. On the other hand, a man of less brilliant and intellectual gifts, in whose veracity we may trust, will always be esteemed as a friend and counselor or companion.

Few people recognize this fact, and, therefore, deviate from truth to their own and their fellow-creatures' disadvantage. Many believe themselves to have done enough when they speak but half a truth ; but, in the same way that half-virtue is no better than weakness, half-truth is worse than a lie, because it shelters itself under the appearance of truth. He who accustoms himself to conceal his thoughts and feelings gains a dangerous gift ; for at the rate at which we become possessed of this faculty, we lose that of giving expression to them.

Many people think that so-called *white lies* are harmless ; but for what reason ? They make use of this sham defense to hide a wrong which they have committed. All lies, white or black, are based upon wrong, and can only cause wrong in their consequences. Righteous action under no

circumstances shuns the light ; and an untruth for no cause whatever can claim justification.

Another kind of untruth is exaggeration. Many people have fallen into the habit of exaggerating the events of everyday life without any evil thought or purpose. No matter how harmless these exaggerations may be in many instances, they exercise an evil influence upon those who accustom themselves to the habit, because others are always inclined to doubt their statements, even if they are in accordance with truth.

Another kind of untruth is that of not keeping your word ; it is an evil habit to which many people are addicted. And how can a man who does not keep his word—and there are many who never keep their word—how can such a man claim the confidence of others? Self-respect, if nothing else, should keep us from this evil habit.

Another kind of untruth is slander. How easily and how frequently is this wrong committed, and how great is the mischief which it has caused ! It is our duty to be just in our judgment of our fellow-creatures, even of our enemies ; and we should take to heart the old saying of the Bible: “Do toward others as thou wouldst that they should do unto thee.”

A man who avoids giving testimony before a court of law, commits an act of injustice by the concealment of truth. Whoever has knowledge of a wrong or a crime, intended or committed, is bound in duty to communicate his knowledge to the authorities, to prevent an intended crime, or to punish one that has been committed. He who neglects this duty either from fear or from thoughtlessness, or because he thinks that it is none of his business, makes himself an accomplice of the crime and renders



himself as punishable as the criminal. Crime and wrong can only be prevented or lessened if honest and virtuous people assist the authorities in the execution of their duty ; and this should be the solemn task of all those who care for the public welfare and general happiness. The truly honest and truly virtuous man does not only leave undone that which is dishonest and vicious, but he tries to fight against it, to prevent it, and to extirpate it. The morality of those people who think that this is none of their business is based upon a very weak foundation.

The taking of an oath is closely connected with our giving testimony to the best of our knowledge. Jesus commanded (Matthew v. 34) that nobody should take an oath, but that his simple *yea* or *nay* should be sufficient ; but in the course of time it has, unfortunately, become evident that the simple *yea* or *nay* has not been sufficiently binding on men's consciences, and it has been thought necessary to find a more binding form in place of the simple assurance. This idea is the origin of the oath. But, unfortunately, no great advantage has been gained by it, and the cause of this is the abuse of the oath. We see that an oath is required under the most trivial circumstances. The oath for military service is actually enforced by punishment, and the oath in political affairs is treated with absolute contempt.

It is the purpose of an oath to ascertain and establish the truth, and from times immemorial an oath has served as a principal means for a judge to ascertain the truth. It has been supposed that even the most truthful man, when he has called God as a witness of the truth of his testimony, has been more careful than ever in establishing the veracity of his evidence ; whilst the man who is not over-

particular in his statements in ordinary life, will become more careful and conscientious in his words when they are recorded upon his oath. An oath, no matter in what form it is given, is an appeal to public belief which must be kept sacredly and conscientiously. Perjury is a crime against conscience and faith; and the oath, if it is not kept sacred, will cause the dissolution of all ties which unite society. But the form of the oath should not be contrary to our inward conscience; and he who does not believe in Christian dogmas should not take an oath in the form of the Christian creed. Such an oath would at once become perjury, and come very near to that Jesuitical sophistry which we find in Busembaum ("Medull. Theol.," Lib. 3, Tract 2), and which reads as follows: "He who has taken an oath without the intention of keeping it, is not bound by it, unless it is to avoid public scandal; for he has not really taken an oath, but merely trifled with it."

He who takes an oath upon the Bible or the Christian faith, intends to testify that that which he means to say is as true as his belief in Christian dogmas or in the contents of the Bible. Yet many who have entirely discarded Christian dogmatism, many who have never read the Bible, or have never been convinced of the truth of its contents, or who even positively do not believe in it, have recklessly taken this oath. And how many acts of perjury have been committed by unconscientious people besides these reckless oaths, taken without forethought! Only quite recently a minister of religion, of high standing in New York, who was accused of adultery, in spite of the most damning evidence, denied his guilt and affirmed his evidence by a false oath.

The form of taking the oath differs in different countries. For instance, in Germany, he who takes an oath lifts up the second and third fingers of his right hand; in England the forefinger of the right hand is placed upon the Bible; in the United States the witness kisses the Bible; in Italy the witness places his right hand on his heart and pronounces the words: "I swear before God and man." In the United States, a witness who does not believe in the Christian dogmas is permitted merely to *affirm*. But all these are only outward forms, and we should accustom ourselves, in everyday life as well as before a court of law, to speak the truth at all times, and never to utter a word which is not in accordance with our conscience.

Two celebrated Germans, Alexander von Humboldt and Frederick Schiller, have pronounced their opinions on this subject, which, strange to say, are diametrically opposed to each other. At the beginning of his letters to Varnhagen von Ense, we find the following words of Humboldt as a motto: "We owe truth only to those whom we deeply respect." Schiller's maxim is: "Truth is due to our enemies as well as to our friends." The choice between these two principles will not be difficult to him who really and disinterestedly respects truth.

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If, in any circumstances, we are in doubt as to what we ought to do, particularly if it is a matter of difference between ourselves and another, there will always be, among the different views which we entertain on the subject, one which leaves a doubt in our mind whether that which we feel inclined to do is right and just, whilst

the second leaves no such doubt. In such a case we only act honestly if we let our opponent have the benefit of the doubt—that is to say, if we do that which leaves no doubt about the righteousness of our action. If we follow this principle, we shall always do right. Another and sure criterion of right and wrong is the question whether we have cause to conceal what we are about to do. Righteous actions do not shun publicity, and need under no circumstances be concealed before the world. But that which must be hidden is always wrong, for evil deeds shun the light because they are in fear of punishment—either the punishment of the law, or that which is really more hurtful than the law—the blame and contempt of our fellow-creatures.

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*Activity and work* are the most important means of producing happiness. He who does not find pleasure in work loses all faculty of joyous existence. A man, no matter how rich he is, cannot be happy if he has no work to do. He cannot be contented and satisfied without activity. The task of our life is to be active; and, if we desire, we can find a field for our activity wherever we look. It relieves him who is loaded with care, and protects us from temptation.

Nobody enjoys the pleasures of this world so little, nobody is to himself so great a burden, as he who does nothing. Only activity can teach us the true enjoyment of life, and only he who knows what it is to work can know the pleasure of recreation. But recreation can be a pleasure to us only when we feel the want of it; and a lazy man can never feel the want of it.

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*Economy* is closely connected with our love for labor: the former is a consequence of the latter. The more economical a man is, the greater is his desire for work by which to support his family in an honest manner. Economy increases in the same ratio as wealth. The most saving people known are the French. According to the statistics of savings banks, we find that \$13.90 come to every inhabitant per annum in England, \$16.60 in the United States, and \$31.40 in France. But woe to him who allows his inclination for economy to become exaggerated into avarice! Economy is one of the principles of human happiness; but avarice, as the proverb says, is the root of all evil.

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*No enemies.*—Many people, in order not to have their peace of mind disturbed, strive not to make enemies; but, unfortunately, this is almost impossible for a man of character, no matter how kindly or peaceably he may be disposed. A man of character who has the courage to express his opinions and thoughts freely and without reserve, instead of weakly assenting to everything, is sure to make enemies. But this should not trouble him. Enemies are as necessary as fresh air. Like the oak, round which the storm rages only to strengthen it, the strength of an honest man will be fortified and increased by the opposition which he meets; and if he makes enemies on one side, he will meet with friends on the other who will help him to gain the victory. A man of principle and uprightness need not fear slander; his walk through life is open to everybody, and the vilest calumnies of his enemies only do him good.

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When some people reach old age, they trouble and torment themselves day by day with *imaginary grievances*, which only embitter their lives. If these people would but write down what has embittered their lives, and, after a few weeks or months, read the notes, they would find that their troubles have mostly been unnecessary, and were not actual misfortunes, as they imagined at the time, but, ordinarily, little unpleasantnesses which they could easily have set aside. Why should we foolishly and unnecessarily embitter our short lives? There is enough real trouble in this world, and it is better and wiser to save our strength for that.

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We assume, sometimes, *habits* which at first appear perfectly harmless, but which are often the seed that produces dangerous and poisonous fruit. To these habits belongs the use of alcoholic liquors. A man begins with one modest drink a day; but his appetite increases with the enjoyment, until he loses all control over his habit. This habit becomes a passion, and the respectable man is changed into a drunkard, and ends his life a drunkard, having ruined himself, his wife, and his children. This is a road to ruin on which thousands and thousands have traveled who had no strength to resist temptation in good time. Another evil habit is the habitual visit to drinking-places, clubs and other societies. A man may, without injury to anybody, spend, from time to time, an hour outside of his family in conversation with his friend over a glass of beer or wine; but such a life outside of a home should not become a habit, for many families have been ruined in consequence of it. Hazlitt says: "The chain of habit coils

itself around the heart like a serpent, to gnaw and stifle it."

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He who has observed life closely has often heard *common-place ideas* expressed in a thoughtless and apparently harmless manner; but in reality they are not harmless. For instance: "Once can't hurt;" "What will people say to it?" "Others do the same;" "You must do in Rome as the Romans do." Let us look a little more closely at these everyday expressions. "Once can't hurt" is the most deceptive of all these maxims, and he who first pronounced it must have been a very poor arithmetician. Once is once, and nothing less or more. He who has stolen once can never again say with a clear conscience that he has never appropriated other people's property; and, if the thief is caught, he is put in prison. On the contrary, it would be better to say that once is ten times and a hundred times; for he who has once entered upon the path of unrighteousness cannot easily be led from it. He who says "A" is easily induced to say "B;" and then another household saying can be applied: "The pitcher goes often to the well, but is broken at last."

"What will people say to it?" seems to be a very harmless question, yet it is proof of an entire absence of independence of character, and is frequently followed by all kinds of folly, and even worse consequences. The fear of what other people will say about our actions induces us often to leave undone what is right and to do what is foolish and wrong. But do these other people, for whose opinion we care, help us when the right which we have left undone and the wrong which we have done lead us



into danger and difficulties? Certainly not. A man should only do that which according to his own judgment is right and reasonable. Silvio Pellico says: "The climax of all baseness is to make ourselves slaves of the opinion of others when we know that it is wrong." We should consult our conscience, and not ask the opinion of other people.

The philosophy of covering our own follies and unjust actions with the excuse that others do the same, is as false and injurious as the preceding; nothing can be more hurtful than this idea. It is a pitiable testimony of the weakness of those whose actions are determined by those of others, who do things for which they have no reasonable motive merely for the sake of imitating other people. Yet thousands and thousands act in this manner, by which they prove that they are not sufficiently independent and intelligent to be responsible for their own actions. It seems incomprehensible that a man can lose his head so completely as to imitate others. Many a one has made himself ridiculous, or has caused himself serious embarrassment, by this want of self-reliance. There is no greater folly in this world than doing something merely because others do it.

Ask a young girl who works in a factory, or makes herself blind with sewing for beggarly pay, instead of taking a place as servant in a respectable household—ask her why she buys ridiculous and worthless ornaments, such as rings and necklaces; why she does not rather save her little wages for the future; ask her why she follows a ridiculous and ugly fashion, and the answer will be: "Because others do it."

Ask a half-grown boy why he wastes his beautiful youth, instead of learning some profitable business; why he smokes, frequents taverns and gambles, or keeps late hours with bad companions, and his reply will be: "Because others do it."

Ask many a father and many a mother why they permit their children to do things which they know are injurious to them, and their answer will be: "Others do it also."

This "Others do it also" has caused much harm and mischief. Would it not be more honorable to oppose by a good example that which is unreasonable or wicked, instead of making ourselves the miserable slaves of the follies of other people? We should not prostitute our dignity and self-respect by imitating others, but seek our pride in independent action, according to the laws of our conscience and our reason.

To "do in Rome as the Romans do" is another fallacious maxim which, unfortunately, is heard too frequently, and determines the line of conduct of weak-hearted people. What does it mean? It means that if other people do foolish and wicked things, we should not oppose them, but let them alone, and follow their example; in its injurious consequences this maxim resembles very much "Others do it also." It is a miserable theory which no sensible man ought to follow. The Romans may do some very foolish and wicked things, but a sensible man will not imitate them simply because he dwells among them.

Another fallacious axiom is that "belief makes us happy." Not every belief makes us happy; not that which is based upon error and miracles; only that belief which, according to our reason, is based upon truth.

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Among the most miserable creatures that walk this earth are those wretched women who have been led astray from the path of virtue, and have fallen so low that they have given themselves up to a life of shame—to *prostitution*. But how has this happened? They have been seduced through the wickedness of man; for every woman, like every other created being, was originally pure; and wherever a girl entered upon the path of vice, it was not her own free will, but the temptation of the seducer which brought about her ruin. But this circumstance is never taken into consideration when passing judgment upon these unfortunate beings. It is, on the contrary, a sad experience that a fallen woman who wishes to return to a better life is despised and shunned more by her own sex, by her sisters who have escaped the temptations of the seducer, than by others. The mere fact that a woman has fallen a victim to the seductive powers of a man causes many so-called respectable women to avoid the pitiable creature. This frigid attitude has driven many a poor, weak girl into the arms of vice. One friendly word, a loving hand, might have saved the unfortunate, might have given her back to honor and virtue; but among her "virtuous" sisters she only meets with cold looks and words of contempt. Can we wonder that she sinks lower and lower, until she has reached the verge of the abyss? And what becomes of the seducer? He moves free and unmolested in all circles of society; no blame is attached to him; and he is courted and flattered by those very women who have nothing but contempt and horror for his victim. These good Christian women, who are so much interested in the conversion of the heathen, have not a word of sympathy for their fallen

sisters. They boast of their Christian sentiment; but they do not know the meaning of the word which Jesus said to those who brought an adulteress to him, that he might judge her: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." Shame upon these hypocrites and Pharisees!

Mrs. Jameson, an excellent judge of everything concerning her sex, says: "Virtue is no virtue until it has experienced temptation." How many proud women walk through the world with a firm step, with an uplifted head and scornful lip, who have gained the crown of lilies without having experienced the terrors of the martyr! They walk along peaceably and undisturbed; temptation never came near to them and with a seductive smile tried to lead them on its flowery path. They are happy; but they should also be kind: they should not judge harshly those whose life has been a stormy one; they should not look down with contempt upon those who were seized by vertigo, whose foot has stumbled, whose strength has weakened. Have pity on these, and do not cast stones at them! Have pity, and give the lie to the words of the writer who has said: "A woman weeps over the misfortunes of all except the faults of a fallen sister."

In the well-known trial of Mr. Beecher for seducing Mrs. Tilton, Mr. Beach, one of the counsel in the suit, said: "Where a virtuous woman first falls, the guilt always belongs to the tempter, and the punishment ought all to be his; and yet how strange are the ways of the world! The weak, deluded woman, falling through the very power and exaltation of her best affections, is damned in the estimation of the world, and he who should bear all

the guilt lives as he will hereafter ; he is accepted as a proper associate by pure and upright men."

It is a horrible and abominable crime when a man has tried to ensnare a woman, and has left her when his purpose has been reached. It is a base crime, which cries to heaven for vengeance, when a man, to accomplish his purpose, has seduced a woman by false pretenses and promises, and leaves her mercilessly to her fate, to seek new victims of his criminal desires.

When Matthias Claudius sent his son John to the University, he wrote in his album: "Never do wrong to a girl, but remember that your mother also was a girl." These are precious words which every man, young or old, should write in his heart with letters of fire.

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He who is obliged to read the newspapers can seldom take one in his hand without finding a number of crimes and misdeeds reported ; and we feel inclined to look with anger and contempt upon those who have committed them. But should such crimes not awaken within us other feelings? The well-known author, Sacher-Masoch, a short time ago wrote: "Modern science has arrived at the humane conclusion to look upon those who have violated or injured the privileges of society, not so much as criminals against the moral constitution of the world, or doers of preconceived or intentional wrong, but as people who are not responsible for their actions; as beings whom nature has endowed with a bestial organization, whose minds are disturbed, whose education has been neglected, or as unfortunate beings who have been driven to excesses by bitter fate. The consequence of this view has been to

change the legislation of all civilized countries. In this manner it is agreed that it is not the duty of society to punish a criminal, to return evil for evil, or to brand him for life, but rather to make him innocuous, and, above all, to improve him and ennoble him, and to lead him to a healthful, moral life of honest labor."

The author is right. A man whose moral action is based upon a belief in God's fatherly love despises no fellow-being, no matter how low it may have sunk. He does not forget that every man is his brother; he does not nurse contempt for him who has gone astray, or even for the criminal, but only cherishes pity.

It should not be said that even the lowest is lost altogether. We should never despair of improving him; and we should never forget that the unfortunate man would not be where he is if his education had been different, if he had not in his childhood been in want of love, which always leads us to the good. As long as man lives, even after a life of depravity, his better self may bring forth a fresh leaf and fresh blossoms. A man can always return to the right path, entertain noble thoughts, conceive noble emotions, and do kind actions. No, we should never lose faith in the reformation of any man. Frequently it has only been one careless hour, one little step from the path of virtue, which has ruined a whole life that might have been one of honor and happiness. The path of evil leads quickly downward; but to return is difficult, because that leads upward.

We should all be active to assist him who has fallen to travel on this difficult road and reach again the height. And we can do this if we do not contemptuously reject him who has done wrong, but assist him, to the best of

our ability, to return to the right path. Even he to whom life has been a hard struggle—and it has been terribly hard to every criminal—will experience some moments, no matter how indifferent he has become, when a deep and burning feeling will come over him, when he is in want of a sympathizing human heart. The criminal is not without heart, and if he meets another which shows him love and sympathy, his own will soften, and a feeling of sorrow and joy will come over him of which he had no idea before.

Many of those whom we know as criminals, have been brought to that position by bad parents and bad education, whilst others have been purposely led to a life of crime from their earliest childhood, and others have inherited the evil spirit from their parents. We should always take these circumstances into consideration. We should never forget that it is no merit of ours if we are better than those unfortunate ones. It is no merit of ours that we have been gifted with a better disposition—that we have grown up under favorable conditions, with good parents, good education, and with the good example of righteous people before us.

Most crimes do not originate in a positive inclination for evil, or, even less, in a defective knowledge of good, but generally in want of energy and will-power, and in wantonness. A light heart is a beautiful gift for life; it helps us to overcome many difficulties which oppress those who are not so favorably constituted. But a light heart does not mean wantonness, which leads to depravity and ruin.

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People, in order to promote prohibitory laws, are frequently in the habit of ascribing the misdeeds of criminals



to the use of spirituous liquors. Moderation in drinking, as well as in everything else, is a sacred duty; but facts do not prove that immoderate drinking is the *cause* of crime, as is generally supposed. On the contrary, it has been proved that in most instances crimes committed in a state of intoxication were by men who in their *sober* senses *have been of a brutal and degraded character*, in whom drunkenness has only brought to light the worst side of their character. Men of character and moral sense, even if they have once forgotten themselves and taken more than is good for them, have never proceeded to excesses, much less to crimes. Mr. G. Mott, formerly Superintendent of the New Jersey State Prison in Trenton, says: "I am firmly convinced that our State prisons are not filled by people whose crimes are the result of drunkenness. Delinquents of this class are sent to penitentiaries and ordinary lockups." The majority of prison-officers are of the same opinion. Habitual drunkards commit, as a rule, petty thefts and misdemeanors, or crimes, which generally are the result of momentary excitement; they are sent to prison also for fighting and other disorderly conduct. Drunkenness as a habit occurs rarely among the class of dangerous criminals, because they are in want of all their senses and all their intellect in the execution of their crimes. Soberness, steady nerves, and unusual mechanical skill, are necessary for the successful accomplishment of their crimes, many of which require extraordinary acuteness and intelligence.

In the Maryland State Prison there were, in November, 1881, one hundred and seventy-one strict temperance men; two hundred and forty-two used alcoholic liquors in

moderation; one hundred and seventy-one used liquor immoderately at intervals, and only four were habitual drunkards. Let us therefore be careful, and not find the cause for crime in the use of intoxicating drinks. Nor should we be induced to put in force prohibition laws—which are in opposition to personal liberty—on account of such crimes. In the State of Maine absolute prohibition has existed for many years; yet we know that the consumption of spirituous liquors is as great there as in any other State. By such laws drunkenness cannot be abolished; on the contrary, it will only be stimulated. The fight against the immoderate use of intoxicating liquors is a perfectly justified and noble movement; but it should not degenerate, as is the case in the United States, into a contest for absolute prohibition, and interference with personal liberty and the most fundamental rights of the citizen. If such is the case, it is the duty of every sensible man to contend with all his power against this infringement on his rights.

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In the same manner as it endeavors, by an absolute prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquors, to deprive everybody of the use of spirituous drinks and force the people to be contented with the use of water, tea and coffee, Christian fanaticism is intent upon the enforcement of the *Sunday Laws*. The Sunday Laws, which condemn every action on Sunday except that of preaching and going to church as a desecration of Sunday—these so-called Blue Laws are the heirloom of the Puritans, who, although persecuted themselves,

made themselves infamous by their cruel persecution of the Quakers and those of other belief.

A few hundred years have passed away, and not one of these people who try to exercise the same tyranny to-day, comprehends that mankind and its views of the world have completely changed, and if they try to improve religious feeling by an enforcement of the Sunday Laws, they produce the very contrary effect, as they make it impossible for those who differ from their opinion, and who will not be made slaves, to become church-attendants. Mankind has made immense progress since the publication of those laws; and what may have appeared useful and desirable two hundred years ago, is no longer fit for the people of these days, who are not willing to be guided by the priests like children.

No sensible man will think of prescribing to others how they should spend the Sabbath-day, and every free man has the right to demand that nobody should spoil his Sunday. Man has not been created for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath has been made for man. But it ought not to be devoted to church-attendance alone, but to recreation from the work of the past week, and to preparation for the work of the coming week. It should also be the day of social enjoyments. God does not intend this world to be a Trappist monastery, in which one man passes by the other with downcast looks and without uttering a word, but he has scattered innumerable lovely, sweet-smelling flowers on our path. He has given us beautiful gifts without number, and he would not have given them to us if it had not been his will that we should enjoy them and delight in them.

Is it possible to find in these days an argument in favor of suspending all business activity on one day of the week? It would be of incalculable injury if all communication by railroad or by steam-navigation were suspended for one day in the week; yet this is the intention of the Sunday Laws. And do the fanatics who are trying to enforce these obnoxious laws upon their fellows-citizens observe them themselves? Not in the least. We see many of them drive along on Sundays in splendid carriages, or they make use of railroads and steamboats, just like those whom they wish to oppress; they use street-cars and stages for going to and from church, when they could very well walk the short distance. To them applies the saying: "Judge me according to my words, but not according to my deeds."

The spirit of our century is directly opposed to all laws which interfere with personal liberty. It is particularly opposed to these antiquated Sunday Laws, which have no standing and no life in our age, whatever the fanatics may say; the least in a country where the principle of liberty is the principle of supreme government, and which boasts of being the freest country on the face of the earth.

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*Self-respect* is an innate quality in every honorable man; it is an expression of the fulfillment of his duty, and it protects us against egotism and undignified actions. Pride and self-conceit are condemnable, whether they rely upon intellectual faculties, money, position, or other worldly considerations. Ambition, greed, revenge, and the desire of self-aggrandizement, are among the evils which extinguish good qualities in the hearts of men,

which have brought families into misery, and, when they have dwelt in the hearts of rulers, have ruined whole nations.

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*Courage* is considered as one of the virtues; but not every courageous action is based upon this virtue. We must make a distinction between moral and physical courage; and, between these, the first stands above the latter. Moral courage faces everything for the sake of principle, and is not manifested by the impulse of a moment. This moral conviction is based upon an ideal desire after the sublime; it has no material aids; it has only one source—supreme morality. It is an oft-proven fact that moral courage, which contends for a conviction and opposes prejudices, is far more rare than physical courage, which calmly faces a pistol or other deadly weapon. Want of moral courage is frequently manifested in everyday life by many people who have not the courage to oppose that which is base and dishonorable. They submit silently to that which is wrong, and countenance it by their apparent assent. Selfishness is the motive of many of these people; and, although they preach day after day against the almighty dollar, they are too cowardly to resist dishonor if the least advantage accrues from non-resistance.

Physical courage, which is principally based upon physical strength, is found even among the most degraded of criminals. Physical courage is most esteemed in the soldier when he shows it in battle; but even there this courage is not based upon a moral foundation. The soldier acts only upon the command which is given him, and,

therefore, acts involuntarily; and, after all, war is nothing better than wholesale murder. How much superior, how much more worthy of our admiration, is the courage of a physician or a nurse who, during the time of an epidemic, hastens to the bed of sickness with self-sacrificing contempt of death!—the courage of a man who ventures his own life in rescuing the drowning man from the waters!—the courage of a fireman who rushes through the flames of a burning house to save a life!—the courage of one who throws himself in front of a locomotive to save a human life!—the courage of the captain of a vessel who will not leave the sinking ship until the last passenger has been saved, knowing that he will be a victim to the waves! These are traits of real courage which fill us with the highest admiration for those who are capable of such deeds of self-sacrifice. Courage is ennobled only by the motives of its actions.

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It is said that *education makes us free*. This is true enough; yet not the one-sided education of the intellect only, but that of the heart also, which really determines the value of a man. Without this refining culture of the heart, the culture of the intellect and of knowledge has very little or no actual value. A look into our prisons teaches us how many really educated people are punished there; and the statistics of crime give indisputable evidence that some of the most refined and educated people have become victims of the hangman. None of these so-called educated people could have sunk so low if they had possessed education of the heart as well as of the intellect.

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We write over our houses and over our doors the word *fraternity*, and it is ever ready on our tongue; but the word alone does not elevate and beautify our lives. It becomes a living fact only by self-denying sacrifice, by the hard-fought victory over our selfishness. In our acts of mercy, in the self-sacrificing assistance rendered to our fellow-creatures—*there* only its sublime meaning will shine forth.

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A degrading feature of our time is the *greed for wealth*, which has caused unspeakable mischief to those who made this the object of their life. Riches cannot make us happy; we should be satisfied if we have a sufficient income to be able to educate our children, who afterward can work for themselves and make their way in life. Innumerable examples teach us that no worldly splendor can give us contentment. Only when our soul and our actions are in perfect harmony, when we are free from the torments of remorse, can we enjoy real happiness; and this we find among the poor more frequently than among the rich. The Creator has given a share of happiness to every one, and he who earnestly seeks happiness is sure to find it; and, above all, in useful activity and work. Labor, faithfulness, industry and moderation, will suffice to make a home for all, in which contentment and happiness will abide. The worth of a man does not depend upon his social position, or upon an humble vocation, or upon whether he is rich or poor, the descendant of a noble family or the son of a laborer, whether a king, an emperor, a peasant, or a beggar; it depends entirely upon his thoughts and actions. It is not the ragged, shabby coat that makes the rabble, but lowmindedness and mean



actions, even if they are clothed in velvet and silks, and adorned with gold and diamonds.

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*Forgive!*—If we have had a quarrel with anybody, no matter whether he is a friend or a stranger, or if we have done wrong to somebody, we should not seek our bed at night without having asked him to forgive us. It seems as if night and sleep increase and fortify the displeasure which animates our souls; and it is really not so difficult to say a word of reconciliation or apology when we have done wrong to our neighbor. But many men, who find it easy enough to offend another, have not the courage to speak a word of reconciliation, because selfishness, that evil counselor, whispers in their ear that they would offend their dignity by doing so. How foolish, how small, how false! On the contrary, by withdrawing an offensive word spoken in haste we honor ourselves. Only a mean-hearted man can intentionally do wrong to others; and it is surely not very difficult to mend what is wrong. A hearty acknowledgment of the wrong we have done, and a word of apology, take away all bitterness which has crept into the offended heart; and, even if the word of apology is not spoken, we will be forgiven by a noble-hearted man; but the sting of the offence will, nevertheless, remain in his heart.

The little word *forgive* works like a charm. We not only forgive, but forget; and only by forgiving and forgetting can peace be re-established in our hearts. The reconciling love which manifests itself in forgiving and forgetting an injury is the purest reflection of the divine element in man.

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Much of our earthly happiness depends upon *our behavior* toward those with whom we are united by ties of family or friendship, or with whom we are connected in the ordinary intercourse of life. We all know how a friendly, courteous word affects us, and we always are attracted toward those who meet us in a courteous and kind manner. A warm pressure of the hand, a hearty welcome, a cheerful tone of voice, an encouraging word, all contribute to our happiness; whilst an unfriendly word, a cold and repulsive behavior, have caused much sorrow and unhappiness.

But outward politeness and friendliness alone should not determine our conduct toward others, but that inward good-will which man owes to man, which proceeds from our hearts, and sheds light and warmth on the hearts of others. Politeness is only an outward form which frequently clothes the very contrary of good-will; but politeness which comes from the heart gives pleasure to the giver and to the receiver.

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*Patriotism and national sentiment* are two ideas which, noble in themselves, have only too frequently been dragged down into the mire, particularly where it has been a question of war, which means ruin and injury to the life and welfare of other nations. As war is in itself immoral and ignoble, such patriotism as furthers it is not a real virtue. True patriotism and true national sentiment seek to further the welfare of the country without injuring others; and they can do this by increasing morality, honesty, and mutual prosperity. The arts of war are not the deeds of true patriotism, but the arts and virtues of peace are really patriotism.

National sentiment is a perfectly justified one, for common language, manners and interest unite people as they do the members of one family. But, as national life is of higher consideration than family life, humanity must stand above nationality; and, as family life should not injuriously affect national life, humanity should not be injured by national sentiment. It is a great crime against humanity to hold out national feeling as a bait to set one nation against the other.

The cherishing of national feeling is really the foundation of patriotism; but it has been so used and degraded by autocratic rulers as to become national fanaticism, and, like every other fanaticism, has awakened bitter feelings and enmity. All those wars which have ruined the prosperity of nations have been caused by it. This ignoble and exclusive nationalism is an enemy of culture and of progress.

We should carefully distinguish between noble and true national sentiment and patriotism and that which is hollow and pretended. A recent author, Dr. Loeffler, makes the following remarks about false patriotism: "We read in certain patriotic songs that we ought to manure the fields of our fatherland with the corpses of our enemies. An enemy must be of very little worth if he can only be used as manure. Every country has its own kind of patriotism, or at least its political and patriotic songs, and these ideas are only too frequently confused with each other. The consequence is that those whom you call enemies give the same name to you, and, therefore, consider you fit for nothing better than to manure their fields. We cannot possibly admire this kind of patriotism in one country without allowing it in the other. The natural consequence would be to have all the acres of the coun-

try manured with the dead bodies of men. That might give very good harvests, but very few harvesters. This kind of patriotism is nothing but a pretext of undisguised hatred against those who may live on this or the other side of a river, or on this or the other side of a red or a blue line on a map."

People will always be different in language and manners, but they ought to be one in that love which sees a brother in every man. The home of a man of heart and intellect is the whole world, and all men are his countrymen; his friends are those who are good and noble, his enemies those who are wicked and depraved. Humanity stands high above nationalism.

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*Liberty* is a word that is much used and much misunderstood, particularly when it is joined to the word *equality*—"Liberty and Equality." It would be more correct to speak of liberty and justice, for justice means equality. True liberty and equality are not established alone by our claims to certain privileges, for these claims ought to be based upon the feelings of duty to our fellow-creatures. Only when this is taken into consideration are true liberty and equality possible. But few people understand how to respect the rights of others; every one wishes to rule, and much mischief is caused thereby. True liberty is impossible without justice; and liberty is by no means the privilege of doing everything we wish to do, but only the right to do all that does not interfere with the rights of others. Reason and equity are the foundations of liberty; the want of these degrades man to a slave.

By the side of this liberty, which forms the bond between ourselves and our fellow-creatures, stands political

liberty, which assures our rights from the Government to which we belong. The idea and the basis of political and moral liberty are the same ; for true political liberty presupposes individual liberty, and its aim can be nothing but moral liberty and improvement ; and the principle of liberty is also a deeply religious one. Let us listen to what three men whose love for liberty and high morality no one will dispute say about the idea of liberty.

Lamennais says : " Liberty is a living power which we feel around us ; it is the protecting spirit of our domestic hearth ; the assurance of our social rights, and the *first* of these rights. God has created neither the lowly nor the great, neither masters nor slaves, neither kings nor subjects. He has made all men equal. So long as you are disunited and selfish you can expect nothing but misery, suffering and oppression. Be men ; nobody has the power to force you under the yoke against your will. You can only be put into bondage if it is your wish. Liberty is the bread which nations have to earn by the sweat of their brow."

Spinoza says : " That State alone can be free and happy which makes the freedom of its citizens the foundation of its existence. Where the privilege of free speech is not accorded, hypocrisy and base, slavish feelings gain the upper hand ; and the contempt which should be the punishment of the wicked becomes a halo which surrounds the heads of the best men."

Temme says : " The true liberty of a people exists only in the liberty of the individual, and, therefore, under such circumstances, conditions and forms as have been developed from the free will of a community, and which do not depend upon external authority, or conditions and

laws which have been forced upon that people. Laws imposed by self-styled authority will always remain untrue, shallow and lifeless."

So long as men consider themselves as bondmen, as slaves who have no will of their own, who are not allowed to act according to their own conviction, but have to obey and submit to the will of others; so long as that consciousness of right has not been awakened in the life of man that he should do nothing against his conviction, he will not attain true liberty, peace and happiness. So long as nations allow themselves to be governed against their wishes, they will occupy a low degree on the scale of liberty. The form of government is of no consequence; it is important only that the rulers should acknowledge the fact that the nations are not for the rulers, but the rulers for the nations. Man is not born to be a slave, but to be a free man, and the more nations learn to reflect, the more will they be fit for liberty. Ecclesiasticism, with its dogmas, does not make man free, but only true religion does. Political liberty is based upon religious liberty. The former is not possible without the latter. Religious liberty is in a condition of continuous development, and as sure as the earth makes its revolution round the sun, political liberty will follow religious freedom. Truly religious men cannot be slaves. Wise and enlightened princes, whose numbers, according to the laws of development, must be constantly on the increase, should consider this, and do everything to lead their people on the path of freedom. The days of those autocrats who use the people over whom they rule as mere tools of their selfishness, as blind slaves, are drawing to a close.

Slavery and serfdom have been abolished, because they were opposed to the spirit of the times and of enlightenment. In the same way the blind submission of subjects to their rulers will cease; for every sensible man has a right to dispose of himself. But the idea of subjection excludes this right of self-disposition. The existence of the State, and the relation of the individual to the State, do not require subjects who have no rights, but citizens who are conscious of their privileges.

At the time when slavery existed in the Southern States, we often read in European newspapers violent and well-founded denunciations of this system, in which astonishment was expressed that it was possible in the nineteenth century to maintain so immoral and degrading an institution. The fact which was most severely censured was that the slave-owners had the right to sell their slaves. But how is it in Europe to this very day? Subjects are not sold for money, but whole provinces and countries are annexed—a new word for robbery—by others without asking the consent of the inhabitants. And these inhabitants are not uneducated colored people who can neither read nor write, but white, civilized people, who are robbed of their right of self-disposal. Is this not slavery in another form? When will the time come in which men will learn that it is incompatible with their dignity and their privileges to be disposed of like a herd of cattle?

Liberty and peace are the foundation of the morality and welfare of nations; servitude and dissension demoralize them and destroy their welfare. Those who work to prevent the spread of liberty among nations do a great wrong, and are at the same time guilty of a serious political



mistake: they imagine they see the spectre of revolution in the legitimate striving for liberty. They are altogether in error. Few of those who are fighting for liberty care for the *form* of government, but are merely desirous that it should be a liberal one *in reality*; and where this is the case, no revolution need be feared; for *a revolution is nothing but the outburst of the moral indignation of a people for wrongs suffered by them, which has taken an active form.* But if no wrong has been done to a people, there is no need of a revolution.

Nations and rulers should not forget that the latter are not the masters of the former, but only their governors, and that the people have not been made for the rulers, but the rulers for the people. A nation should be governed, but not commanded. To command presupposes a master, and, in a political sense, the complement of a master is a slave. The inhabitants of a country should not be either the servants or the slaves of a ruler, but free and independent citizens, jealous of their liberty. There is something sublime in an enthusiastic nation, most particularly so in a nation enthusiastic for its liberty.

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We often hear of *historical rights*, by which is meant that something, because it existed in olden times, and has done so until our day, should continue so, and enjoy the same privileges. History itself teaches us how erroneous is this idea, for we see that so-called historical rights are continually being overthrown to make room for new ideas; and the result has always been beneficent to mankind. The so-called historical right prevents progress, and turns the paradise of life into a dark vault filled

with bones and skulls. Every time has its own privileges, and no generation should be the slave of a former one. The present generation is under no obligation to make the opinions of former ones its own; on the contrary, it is our duty to progress with the times, to examine for ourselves, and to arrive at that which we consider as just and reasonable.

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All civilized peoples regard *murder* as the gravest crime, and it is punished in almost all countries by the death of the murderer. But there are also other kinds of murder—and every intentional homicide is murder—which are not considered as being crimes, but toward which some palliation is extended. To this category belong: first, suicide, for which all kinds of motives and excuses are sought; secondly, the duel, regarded as made imperative by honor; thirdly, the death-penalty, the justification of which is looked for in the passage of the Old Testament, “He who sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed;” fourthly, and finally, killing in warfare, regarded as something praiseworthy, and spoken of as “deeds of heroism.”

Let us examine these four kinds of murder more closely. Whilst *suicide* is almost unknown to uncivilized people, and whilst ancient history, as well as that of the Middle Ages, mentions but few instances of it, the frequency of this crime in the present century has become so frightful as to fill one with horror. I have already given numerical proof of this in my chapter entitled, “Has Christianity Made Mankind Better?” It is interesting to learn the relation between the number of suicides and the different creeds and denominations; and on this point also the Italian

statistician, Professor Morselli, gives information. According to him, the number of suicides in every million of people is, among Protestants, 102.7; Roman Catholics, 62.3; Israelites, 48.4; Greek Catholics, 36.2; whilst among Mohammedans suicides are much rarer. The first thing that strikes us here is the small number of suicides which the Israelites furnish as compared with Christians; and the next is, that so extraordinarily large a number should be found among Protestants as compared with Catholics. What can be the reason for this latter proportion? Probably nothing but the fact that the Catholic Church wields a much more rigorous discipline than the Protestant Church, and allows no reflection on religious matters or Church questions, but insists simply on blind belief, whilst Protestantism grants liberty of thought. When a Protestant begins to think, however, and when Church dogmas have clouded his faith in a Supreme Being, in one God, he easily throws off, together with these dogmas, his belief in God, his religion, and then, having lost this blissful belief, when he encounters the trials and hardships of fate he has no support, nothing to lift him up and give him new courage.

But does not Christianity in general lead men into a struggle too difficult for many a one, by constantly holding up before his eyes his sinfulness, by constantly admonishing to repentance, and thus teaching almost an actual hate of his own life? Whoever grows up in a Christian atmosphere can only too easily drift into a destructive self-conflict, which may lead to dangerous resolutions, from which one cannot free one's self so as to return to the joyfulness of confidence in God and childlike resignation to his will. One can hardly wonder that this

doctrine of the "earthly vale of tears," which is continually preached, should bear sad fruit, and that the eternal preaching of this life being all vanity and delusion, a time of probation, of want and suffering, of all earthly effort being vain and objectless, should induce many a one to quit this "vale of tears" as soon as possible.

If we look around for the external reasons for suicide, we shall find the following: Disappointed love, jealousy, domestic discord, sorrow, want of work, the struggle for existence, business losses, wounded vanity, fear of punishment, illness, greed of gain, the mania for pleasure, and, finally, that pseudo-civilization and mock-culture which are encountered so often now-a-days. But how can these trials and passions, hard though some of them may be to bear and conquer—how can they lead any reasoning and moral being to the perpetration of a crime? Every suicide—whatever its external cause—is a crime for which, though it entails no responsibility to any human judge, the perpetrator has to answer to God, as no man has the right to destroy the life given to him by God, the Lord over life and death. The phenomenon of a constant increase in the number of suicides clearly finds an explanation in the decadence of religious and moral sentiment, and in the sway of sensuality over reason, to which attention has been called before. To escape from some disagreeable emotion, from the idea of having sustained an insult, or to get rid of the responsibility for some wrong, annoying circumstances—but all merely transient and temporary in their nature—the suicide relinquishes his life and destroys it by a crime; whilst, if he had only borne his fate for a short while, consolation and calmness would surely have come to him, and the cloud's silver lining would have

become visible to him. How often does it happen that people in their anger wish themselves dead, only to perceive, a few moments later, how foolish and how sinful the thought was!

In the case of nearly every suicide the world is much exercised as to the cause of the crime, and this or that outward reason is always found. But nobody thinks of the deeper-lying and real cause. This is the constantly increasing irreligion and godlessness; for only a man that has lost his faith in God's fatherly love can commit such an iniquitous deed. Any one who is religious knows that the creature never has the right to interfere with the Creator's ordination; and such a one, no matter what may happen to him, will never lose his courage, and never give way to the sinful thought of committing the crime of suicide. Mazaryk says: "Neither a good Catholic nor a Protestant will despair of life, only the bad Catholic and the bad Protestant."

The question whether suicide is an act of cowardice or of courage is often argued. Of course, the commission of any great crime—and, consequently, that of suicide also—requires a certain determination, to some extent a physical courage; but this is far from being moral courage. Suicide is an act of cowardice, which has not the courage to fight out the combat, but shrinks from it and prefers to abandon the struggle. Suicide is a flight from evils which may be merely threatening, actually existing, or only imagined. The suicide is, under all circumstances, a mental weakling, as he allows himself to be entirely overcome by external circumstances in conflict with himself. Whatever may have been the external cause for the unholy deed of self-destruction, it is high time to stop

characterizing this act of cowardice as one of courage—an act which, under all circumstances, is and remains a crime.

But the self-murderer is not only a coward, and, as such, to be despised: he is also an egotist, because he acts merely on his own inclinations, without considering his duty toward his relatives and fellow-beings. He considers himself entitled to be his own judge, and executes this judicial function by a crime. Let us not make the objection that the suicide is irresponsible, that he is to be pitied as the victim of disease, but not condemned as a criminal. That is false sentiment. Let us call things by their right names. Of course, cases do occur where people actually demented take their own lives, and we cannot withhold from such our most heartfelt pity; but dementia should be used as little as a pretext in palliation of or excuse for suicide as for any other crime.

And the crime of self-destruction has still another bad feature—namely, that of psychical infection, fostered by the newspapers, which never fail to give the fullest possible reports of every suicide. Many facts could be cited to prove that such reports have the tendency to cause other suicides of a similar kind. And does it not appear natural that people who harbor so iniquitous a thought should be encouraged to the execution of it by the reading of something similar? We all know the old adage that evil examples corrupt good manners. It may be difficult for newspapers to withhold such items of local news from their readers; but if such news has to be furnished, it ought at least to be done in a way which would not encourage to imitation; and this end would be attained if every suicide, no matter who the self-destroyer might be, were to be

characterized as what it really is—a crime and an act of cowardice. A person lacking the courage necessary for fighting life's battle is a coward.

Legislators have always endeavored to limit the spread of self-destruction, but they have had recourse to mistaken means. In England the suicide's body was buried near the crossing of four roads, and a stake was driven through it; and in Germany he is, to this day, interred close to the cemetery-wall. But by all this we punish only the survivors, who, under such circumstances, are the very ones most in need of consolation and forbearance. Away, then, with such brutalities! But it would be a good and wise thing to avoid all display in such cases; such a course, the simplest interment, would probably also best suit the feelings of the survivors.

This much concerning suicide. Let us now pass on to the *duel*. One of the profoundest thinkers and most ardent patriots of the first half of our century, Michael Etienne, has pronounced the doom of the duel in a pamphlet written in 1849, published, however, only a few years ago. This pamphlet begins with the following words: "There is a cruel irony in the thought that two human beings should be driven so far by hatred as to seek to take each from the other that life for which they are responsible to society; to make arrangements to butcher or maim each other in cold blood, and in the presence of witnesses; that they, despising the protection of society, should appeal to themselves, and, in the wild impulse of passion, led by mistaken ideas and prejudices, induced by friend or foe, should risk the life that does not belong to them, because of a puerile insult, an angry look, a contemptuous mien, or an ill-considered word. In the



blood of his fellow-creature he sees with satisfaction the reparation necessary for the support of a mistaken conception of shaky honor; for a mere misstep in private life he substitutes a crime, and atones for the insult to his wounded honor by a murder, or by crippling his adversary. Even in a state of nature, the savage denizens of the virgin forests wage no such ferocious war upon each other as do the civilized peoples. The logic of the tiger is elevated to the highest reason, in order to make it possible to shed a fellow-creature's blood with propriety. It is a delusion of the most frightful kind. What mental rottenness and degeneracy there must be, when the passions of a circle of people form the moral code according to which one person has to slay another, in order not to be covered with derision and shame, with contempt and dishonor!"

The much-to-be-deplored duel mania is raging in Europe principally among two classes—military officers and students—and, as regards the latter, chiefly among those at German universities. To show to what degree this disgusting nuisance has grown, it will suffice to mention that in February, 1883, at Jena, there took place, in *a single day*, not less than twenty-one duels. It is incomprehensible that the legislators of European countries have never yet been able to surmount the prejudice and folly that injured honor—injured either really or supposititiously—can be rehabilitated by a duel, a murder. It is incomprehensible, but, at the same time, it is a proof of the difficulties of the struggle against unreason. There are, it is true, in some countries laws against dueling, but these laws emanate from civil authorities: they are generally not observed by military officials, and sometimes

are treated with open contempt. As late as 1882, a case occurred in Prussia in which an officer declined a duel because the laws of the State, sanctioned by the king, forbade the duel under heavy penalties. Against this officer, who acted according to law, the "court of honor" gave the decision that he should be dismissed from the army, because he had not shown a proper sense of honor, and had violated his duty as an officer under aggravated circumstances. And quite recently a like case has occurred in Austria. An officer in the army who refused to accept a challenge to fight a duel—being guided in this course by religion, common sense and conscience—was likewise expelled by the "court of honor" of the army corps to which he belonged. Such a conflict between law and judgment in civilized countries is scarcely conceivable, and yet is a fact.

Must not such a mockery of law evidently contribute to continue the prejudice in favor of dueling, and to supply it with new victims? What has the moral sense to say to this? And what miserable conceptions of religion and morality, of honor and right, must delude the minds where anything like this is possible in the nineteenth century! Does it not require more real courage to oppose vigorously such a deep-seated, blind prejudice, and to expose one's self to the contempt of those who still cling to the delusion, than to confront a loaded pistol? It takes mere physical courage to do the latter; but the refusal to commit a murder, or anything that might possibly result in murder, requires moral courage.

One calls the duel a "chivalrous" settlement of affairs of honor; but it is a barbarous and vicious custom, defying all morality, all reason, and all sense of justice;

of which all civilized beings ought to be ashamed ; and which, considered from a moral standpoint, can never be called anything else than murder. But is such a perverted conception, defying all good morals and all right, to continue to exist, and to bring ruin upon families ? Is it not rather time to put it away with other absurdities belonging to bygone times ? Should not men cease to prefer to burden their consciences rather than to risk the contempt of fools ? Who is the really honorable man, he who pardons an insult, or he who strives to avenge it ?—he who challenges, or he who has the courage to decline the challenge, in defiance of prejudice ? He is the truly honorable man who does, at any cost, that which is right ; and he is a real coward who, merely to escape the ridicule of fools, does wrong and weighs down his conscience.

But there are also some countries in which people have already attained a reasonable estimate of the duel. In Switzerland it occurs only rarely ; and in England it has been almost completely suppressed. A generation ago, a society was organized there, by peers and other leading men, the members of which bound themselves not to fight any duel. No longer ago than fifty or sixty years, we find Wellington, Peel, Canning, the most eminent statesmen, acting the part of duelists ; but reason and public opinion, supported by the press, have gradually become completely victorious, and it may be said without exaggeration that in England no decent person has in these days anything to do with dueling. This has, however, been brought about in a great measure by legislation, as English law imposes heavy penalties on dueling, without regard to the status of the participants as civilians or military officers. An officer wounding his adversary in a

duel would be arraigned like a common murderer before the assizes, and condemned to the penitentiary, and, in case of the wounds being fatal, would be condemned to death and his property confiscated. Public opinion in England has, in this regard, made such progress that the duel is there considered as infamous.

The great Irish agitator, O'Connell, accepted no further challenge after he had had the misfortune to kill an adversary in a duel; and every moral man will do likewise, even without having a human life to answer for already. Every right-thinking person must acknowledge that he has duties toward his family, as well as toward his country, from the fulfillment of which he cannot withdraw in a criminal manner by means of a duel. Whoever considers an external reparation of an insult as requisite, can apply for it to the courts. But every one having true self-respect should follow the example of the celebrated Athenian statesman, Pericles, who, after having been pursued by an adversary with abuse, up to his very door, caused this person to be accompanied home by his own servant, bearing a lantern.

We now come to the third kind of murder that is sanctioned or privileged—the *death-penalty*. The Bible says. "He who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." But, on the other hand, the Bible also says: "Thou shalt not kill;" and, as is frequently the case with the Bible, we find here two passages diametrically opposed to each other, so that the advocates as well as the opponents of the death-penalty can base their arguments on the Bible. Let us, therefore, put the Bible aside, and treat the question whether the death-penalty be just and fair from a purely human standpoint.

The penal code has several theories for the death-penalty—namely, determent, retaliation (revenge), satisfaction for the State, and security for the State. The three latter have been pretty well abandoned, and the justification of the death-penalty is now mainly based on the theory of deterring by intimidation, insisting or supposing that the sight of an execution must be a warning to others not to commit a similar crime. But the penal code recognizes still another theory as the warrant for punishment *in general*, and that is the reformatory theory—the only one which is morally justified, but which cannot be considered in the case of a death-penalty; because, if a person be executed, there can be no intention of reforming him, and if we hang a man or decapitate him, we deprive him, through violence, of all possibility of reformation; we rest satisfied with simply taking his life, murdering him. According to the passage: “He who sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed,” in the death-penalty merely a remnant of “vendetta” is exercised. In the course of time, a milder practice has taken place even with regard to capital punishment, horrible as it may be in itself, inasmuch as the law has ceased to torture the condemned, contenting itself with simply slaying them; the number of the crimes for which this punishment is prescribed has also been diminished, and has been reduced in all countries to that of murder—a great progress in comparison with the last century, when, in England, about a hundred and fifty different crimes were punishable by death. Among these was theft to the value of forty shillings—truly, a contemptible price for a human life! How morally debased were the opinions entertained at that time concerning punishment and

the value of human life, is most strikingly illustrated by the fact that even a man of the high position of Lord Chancellor Eldon should have exclaimed, horror-stricken—on the occasion of a motion in Parliament for the abolition of this forty-shilling law—“Why, by this innovation all I possess would be left entirely unprotected!”

All this has been changed. Murder alone receives the death-penalty. Is it warranted even in this case?

The celebrated authority in criminal law, Temme, speaks in one of his works as follows concerning punishment by death: “Why do we still have the death-penalty, which is no punishment, but a cruelty, a barbarity? They say, to murder a human being, to annihilate a human life, is something so horrible, inhuman, unnatural, that it can be expiated only by the severest punishment. And in what do they find this severest punishment? They murder the murderer! They annihilate in cold blood his life, a second one in addition to the first! And the second murder they call right, justice; and for the murderer, who is to be murdered, special tortures have first to be created. The death-sentence is announced to the murderer weeks beforehand, and it is said to him: ‘Thou shalt die a violent death. We will lead thee to the scaffold, and there the servants of the executioner will seize thee, strap thee on the block, and then the executioner will come to thee and cut off thy head.’ Thus the murderer will be murdered, after having had before his eyes for weeks and months the picture of his approaching cruel death. ‘But, after all,’ they say to him, ‘it is possible that you may be pardoned,’ in order to make still more terrible, by the seconds of hope, the weeks and



months of deadly anguish! And this they call justice, even Christian justice!"

The first step to the abolition of the death-penalty was made in 1764, by the celebrated Italian criminal lawyer, Beccaria, the champion against capital punishment, by proving that this penalty had never deterred criminals from inflicting harm upon society. But a long time elapsed before his endeavors bore the first fruits. In Tuscany the death-penalty was abolished in 1786, and in Austria in 1787. It was, however, re-enacted in Tuscany in 1852; but this roused such a storm of indignation, that the Government found itself forced to annul it once more. In Austria it was also re-enacted. In Germany the National Assembly of 1848 passed a resolution of abolition, which was put into effect in Oldenburg, Bremen, Nassau, Anhalt, and the Kingdom of Saxony, but not permanently; for, at the establishment of the German Empire, when the reaction regained full power, that resolution of the National Assembly of 1848 was annulled; and, since that time, intelligent Germany can again be proud of the fact that in its domain murder will again be committed *de jure*. In Switzerland the death-penalty has been abolished in several cantons, but has been re-enacted in some of them. In Holland it was abolished in 1870; and the same has been done in Portugal, Belgium, and Roumania. Among the States of the American Union it was abolished in 1846 by Michigan, in 1852 by Rhode Island, and in 1853 by Wisconsin. The remaining States and the remaining foreign countries have not yet been able to attain the moral elevation requisite for this act of humanity.

That the death-penalty as a means of deterring from crime is a complete mistake; that, on the contrary, the



abolition of the death-penalty lessens the number of the worst crimes, whilst the spectacle of executions increases them, is proved by the experience of various countries. In Holland no parricide or matricide was committed in the ten years following the abolition, whilst these crimes occurred frequently in the fifty years preceding the abolition. In Tuscany it was shown that the abolition of the death-penalty led to no increase in the number of the crimes considered worthy of death; and the same result has followed the abolition in States of the Union. In Wurtemberg no death-sentence was executed under Karl Wilhelm; in Gotha, none in fifty years; and in Russia, under the Empress Elizabeth, none in twenty years, without this being followed very soon by further crimes punishable by death. An English prison chaplain, who during his official career prepared one hundred and sixty-seven criminals for execution, has testified that of these one hundred and sixty-seven persons, one hundred and sixty-one had been proved to have witnessed public executions. There is evidence that people who had just seen an execution, only a few hours afterward, themselves committed murder. Can one, in the face of such testimony, claim any validity for the theory of deterring by intimidation? Considering the frightful brutality in the intentional killing of a human being; considering the profoundly demoralizing effect which executions entail, and, from their very nature, must entail, one can indeed not wonder that their result is not a decrease, but an increase of heinous crimes.

Now let us hear what a murderer said, at the last moment before his execution, about the death-penalty. A physician—consequently an educated man—had murdered, some time before, a girl whom he had previously seduced, and

he was condemned to death in Cleveland. Standing under the gallows, he addressed those present, saying, among other things, the following: "I will concede, gentlemen, that life is a precious gift, and that it must be protected; and that if anybody murders, human nature's natural instinct demands his life. Consequently, if the people of Bedford had killed me at the time I committed the deed, I would have said it was not inhuman, and was done in passion; but if, after six months of deliberation and preparation, people demand my life, then they are murderers.

"What would be the most advantageous for you, gentlemen—to put this rope round my neck, or to send me to the penitentiary, to keep me there as many years as you may deem proper; to dismiss me then as a penitent, so that I might use for the benefit of my fellow-men what little of talent and power the Creator has given me?

"Capital punishment is annihilating. One life is as good as another. I admit that; but what advantage will my death bring about? None. I do not even remember the moment when, in madness and drunkenness, I found a mark for the pistol. Still, such is law, and we must obey the law. This law, however, is made by man, and is not the law of God.

"I do not enter into the land of annihilation, but into the land of progress; and whilst I acknowledge the justness of the law of Ohio, I say that it is foolish and vain. Or do you think that, because this rope puts an end to my life, crimes will be prevented? The same influences which surrounded me will cause the same effects in others, and no example can prevent this.

"I submit to the law of the land, and leave you. I hope that this execution will be an example for everybody,

not in favor of capital punishment, but to demonstrate its folly, and that you may reflect on this."

The way in which this man has reasoned out his rejection of the rightfulness of the death-penalty well merits attention. It indicates the sole moral purpose of any punishment—namely, the reformation of him who has committed a crime. Or would you doubt that even the worst criminal may arrive at intelligent remorse and honest repentance? And when he thus repents, honestly and truly, is he not then a reformed man? And if such reformation is possible, have we then the right to deprive him who has sinned, who has committed a crime, of life, and to cut him off from repentance and reformation? Ample experience in penitentiaries furnishes the proof that it is not necessary to destroy the criminal; that, on the contrary, he may, by judicious treatment, be reformed, be led to true repentance, and his guilt be thus properly expiated. God does not want the death of the sinner, but that he repent and reform: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance."—St. Luke xv. 7.

The intimidation theory, the idea of killing the one in order to strengthen thereby the virtue of the others, is an absurd perversion of all moral thought. Of all the means for exercising good moral influence on society, this one of shedding human blood, or of killing in any way a human being, is probably the most mistaken, the most dreadful and revolting. The most efficient protection of life is its sacredness; and this sentiment is weakened by every execution. The great Roman philosopher, Cicero, expressed himself as follows on capital punishment: "Far

be the death-penalty from us, far its executors and implements; for every mention of it is painful to a free man." And in the criminal work, "The New Pittaval," vol. xxvii., we find the following passage: "When the champions of capital punishment enter the lists for it armed with *one* well-known quotation from the Bible—'He who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed'—it is just as if something were decided as of right, on the strength of *one* passage in a code, though it were an insult to the sense of justice of a whole nation."

But if it should be thought necessary to secure, besides the only moral end of any punishment, some deterring effect in the case of those crimes called deserving of death, this will be reached in the surest way by *prompt* adjudication. Do not procrastinate proceedings for murder for months and years, but have punishment follow as speedily as possible. Yet do not condemn to death, but to imprisonment for twenty years, or for life. That will have a really deterring effect, and will bring to their senses people of violent nature predisposed to crime.

But can confinement for *life* be justified even in the case of murder? The law allows for every misdeed or crime a time of limitation, after the expiration of which the culprit can no longer be held responsible. In almost all countries this limitation is fixed at twenty years for murder; and if a person who has committed murder cannot legally be punished after the lapse of twenty years, ought not, then, the maximum penalty for murder to be twenty years? Had the culprit succeeded in escaping judicial prosecution for twenty years, he would then be entirely free, and could not be touched. Would it not be fair, then, when he has not evaded punishment, but has borne the penalty during

twenty years, to restore his liberty to him just as much as if he had not been punished at all?

A further argument against the death-penalty is furnished by the many judicial murders, the many condemnations of innocent people, which criminal history reports. It is bad enough if innocent people are condemned to imprisonment, their innocence established only after the lapse of months or years, and are then restored to liberty. But how—and that, too, has occurred often—if an innocent person is condemned to death, executed, and his innocence found out only afterward? Life once taken cannot be restored. Frederick the Wise says: “Nothing is easier than to take human life. But is it right? Can we restore it to him, should he be innocent; and would we not be criminals toward him in that case?”

And when experience teaches that in all countries sentences of civil and criminal courts are every day set aside as unjust by higher courts, and when this is clear proof of the human weakness of judges, who, nevertheless, are undoubtedly honest as a rule—cultivated men, well versed in law, who certainly have no intention of doing wrong—and when one sees how the decisions differ, dare one, under these circumstances, expose a human life, be it that of the vilest criminal even, to the vacillations of human opinion? But whoever does not believe that many really innocent people are executed, need only look into the transactions of the English Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, by which it is demonstrated that in two hundred years about two hundred *innocent* people have been butchered. And this by no means includes the many hundreds who—as previously shown—were hanged in England in former years for theft and other minor crimes.

Another argument against the death-penalty is the repugnance of many jurors to giving a verdict of "guilty" against a murderer, because they know that the sentence entailed thereby will be that of death, and their humane feeling refuses to deliver a fellow-being up to death. Rather than do this, they give a verdict of "not guilty," and, in this way, criminals deserving punishment often escape, to the great injury of society.

It was said in this chapter that in modern times all torturing of convicts has been abolished by law; but has this been done so far as custom is concerned? How often has it occurred, in places where decapitation is still effected by the axe, that the stroke missed, the instrument burying itself in the shoulder instead, so that the unfortunate creature had to be executed under additional tortures! And how innumerable are the instances in the United States, where hanging is still practiced, in which, owing to the bungling of the hangman, the culprit had to go through the process of hanging two or three times before being allowed to give up his miserable life! In McKean County, Penna., in 1879, a murderer had in this way to undergo the operation twice; at Sioux Falls, Dakota, in 1882, another one three times; and a third one, a boy of eighteen years, in Georgia, in 1883, twice; and between the two operations an hour expired before he was dead. Are not such cases alone sufficient to give every person of feeling a perfect horror of capital punishment?

But executions have still another dark side; it consists in the blasphemy of the priests against everything that Christianity calls religion. They represent to the condemned that they will now enter directly into heaven, and be received by Christ; there stands the culprit, instead



of being deeply humiliated by the sense of his criminality, actually jubilant, and rejoicing that he will soon be with Christ, and that Christ will receive him with all glory! Is not that rank blasphemy? The priests who seduce these miserable sinners to such fantastic visions, ought, instead, to exert all their influence to induce them to really repent of their bloody deeds. Such a conversion, at the moment of going to the block or the gallows, is utterly worthless, and nothing but self-deceit and a deception of others. True, serious, profound and saving repentance can be arrived at only gradually, and will never show itself in jubilant outpourings under the gallows.

And to what scandalous, outrageous, immoral behavior on the part of the public does not a condemnation lead! The condemned receives from all sides proofs of sympathy: women and girls present flowers; tracts, books, delicacies, are sent; and people importune those in charge to allow them to see the condemned or to exchange a few words with him. It is a glorification of crime. Many an honest, poor fellow, on the other hand, is allowed to die in his lonely chamber; for him no sympathy is felt, and nobody sends him dainties. How perverted and foolish this world is!

However much it may be in accordance with the spirit of modern times not to bury the body of the culprit any longer, as formerly, in the spot receiving the offal of the shambles, but in the cemetery, where so many sinners are lying—even such as have not been condemned judicially—it is, nevertheless, very unwise, on the other hand, to give executed criminals public and pompous interment and obsequies, as is often the case, particularly in the United States. This, too, is a real glorification of crime,



and must make an impression on the lower classes—those from which criminals mostly come—not conducive to good morals.

The fact that in 1878 the executioner of Berlin gave a grand dinner, accompanied by music, on the day of the execution of Hoedel, who had fired on the Emperor; and the other fact, that twelve hundred—actually twelve hundred—people applied for the position of hangman of London, which had become vacant by the death of Marwood—these facts, I say, ought to fill our century with burning shame.

When will the old barbarism, belonging to the dark past, be finally cleared away, and capital punishment be abolished everywhere? When will the legislatures of the different countries at last consider it their sacred duty not to tolerate the death-penalty any longer? When will citizens, called for jury duty, refuse to serve in murder-cases so long as the murderous law of capital punishment exists? When will judges insist earnestly on the abrogation of the murderous law which surely has often caused them bitter qualms of conscience? When, finally, will rulers recoil with horror from lending their assistance to an execution, refuse to commit themselves, and aid directly in premeditated murder? Or is an execution, perchance, not a real, premeditated murder—murder in the first degree? According to the laws of all civilized countries, every premeditated and intentional killing of a human being is murder in the first degree. Well, then, are not premeditation and intention to the greatest possible extent the preliminaries of every execution? Even in those times when capital punishment was still considered as something indispensable, the executioner, the hangman, was con-

sidered dishonorable, and no decent, reputable man would shake hands with him, or would drink with him, or enter into any connection with him. And this shrinking from him sprang from the truly human feeling of horror at a man who could be bought with money to slay his fellow-men. And do you want, perhaps, to palliate executions by saying that the law of the State exacts them? There is a higher law than all State laws, and that is the law of common human morality, which we find laid down in the precepts of the most diverging confessions. Already the old Mosaic law, known as the Decalogue, contains the commandment: "Thou shalt not kill;" and the same injunction we find in the Koran, as well as in the law-books of the Hindoos and of other creeds. Civilization has put an end to former still more horrible modes of capital punishment, such as breaking on the wheel, impalement, quartering, burning at the stake, etc., and has simplified executions; but the nineteenth century, which has already given birth to so much progress, ought not to come to an end without having abolished also this last horrible remnant of capital punishment, and without having expunged it from the law-books of the civilized world. Away, then, with this relic of a long-passed dark age, this mockery of the civilization of our century, this blot on our generation! Every one who has human feelings in his breast, every one who still recognizes even in the criminal the human being, the unfortunate, erring fellow-brother, ought to lift up his voice, to assist in attaining this noble, this truly humane end.

I repeat, the foremost and only *moral* end of *any* punishment is the reformation of the criminal; and for this high purpose capital punishment does not only not answer, but

has even the diametrically opposite effect; for the so-called conversions which the priest forces upon the condemned in the last hours or moments, in plain view of the scaffold and in the face of death, are no real reformations, but mere outward forms by which the priest thinks to fulfill his duty. Reformation requires time, and calm reflection uninterrupted by external influences. He who is once slain can neither reflect nor reform any more. It cannot be asserted or predicted of any criminal, not even of the worst, that he is *incapable* of reformation. Even the worst criminal may repent—repent profoundly; and he will and must repent, if he be only given time for mature reflection, and subjected to impressions whose influence is in that direction. Repentance brings forth reformation; and, to make the latter possible, the criminal's life has to be preserved. Confine him for many years; but do not take his life, do not cut him off from the possibility of repentance and reformation, from the recovery of his better self. You have no right to do that!

The fourth kind of murder which is tolerated and sanctioned is *war*, with its concomitant, murder of people in large numbers. Notwithstanding the many voices which have been heard against war, notwithstanding all the blood already spilled in war, and the misery brought upon the world by it, there are still people who declare war to be a necessity; and this is done either from unreason, or from the selfishness and the lust of dominion of those who want to increase their power or secure other advantages, and of those who live by war. But is war really a necessity? No, it is not. Yet the majority of people of to-day will not believe this; and if you tell them that the time will come when war will no longer drench

the lands with blood, they smile superciliously, or say sneeringly that it will probably take another thousand years before this "necessary evil" will have ceased to exist. Consequently, it is conceded that war is an evil; but no evil is necessary. Every evil is reprehensible, and we must strive to uproot it.

Those who say war is a necessity deceive others and perhaps themselves. No war is necessary; it is a crime against all mankind, a vandalism of bygone times, and every war that is carried on is a new sowing of the poison of corruption and ruin. Certainly, diplomacy too says war is necessary and inevitable; but in so doing it deceives the world; and as diplomacy is always the enemy of the freedom of peoples, so it also unscrupulously destroys the health and wealth of the peoples by war, in order to attain its selfish ends. Wars mostly serve only to satisfy the desires of those in power, their lust for increase of dominion, and for converting the people into their slaves without any will of their own. Men in power are assisted in their efforts of this kind by the ambition of those who want to gain honor and wealth through war; by the people, however, through a mistaken conception of patriotism.

In war what conquers? Right? No! No!  
But Force and Fraud are gainers by its woe.  
War is a curse. The land in ruin lies,  
The people bleed, and slaughtered Freedom dies.

The law of the strongest can never decide in the realms of truth; might and right are conceptions of entirely different natures, and might is never able to create a right. Consequently, the oft-heard expression that a war has settled this or that question of right is entirely illogical and foolish.

When cultivated and well-meaning people in private life have a difference which they cannot settle between themselves, they lay the case before a court, and its final decision satisfies them. Uncultivated people, however, instead of leaving the settlement of their quarrel to the courts, take the decision into their own hands: they fight, and are punished for it; and if they go far enough for one of them to take the life of the other, we call it murder, and hang the murderer or cut off his head. But when a quarrel breaks out between potentates, they do not submit the point at issue to a court of arbitration, like civilized people, but, like the uncultivated man, like the dregs of the people, they take matters into their own hands: they appeal to brute force and fight their quarrel out—though not personally—but make war on their adversary, and cause the murder of thousands and thousands, in order to carry out their will. When, then, the shedding of blood and the murdering have been going on long enough to exhaust one of the adversaries, a so-called Congress comes together to make “peace,” and then the lands of the vanquished are divided up, just as robbers divide the booty among themselves after a raid. But the people who inhabit the countries thus divided up are not asked whether they want to live under this or that Government, but are traded away like a flock of sheep, and are then the subjects, or, rather, the property, of him to whose share they have fallen.

Now, is there in this way of treating a people even the least spark of religion, morality, or right, but is it not, on the contrary, in direct opposition to these wise guides of life? Why cannot rulers, when they quarrel among each other, do as decent people in private life do—submit

the matter to arbitration, instead of resorting to such brutal measures as war? And why do the peoples allow their rulers the possibility of making war?

Warfare requires money—a great deal of money. Who furnishes it? In the first instance the great bankers; but these advance it only on good interest. The people have to pay the interest on these war loans, and have to pay back the principal—the same people who often enough lead only a miserable life, in sorrow and hunger. But, in addition to all this, the people have to give even their blood and life, and must consent to murder or be murdered by their fellow-men, who are described as their enemies, though no one of them ever did them any harm. There are, then, two requisites for warfare—in the first place, money, and in the second, men who are willing to become the murderers of their fellow-men, or to allow themselves to be killed or maimed. Consequently, he who wages war depends on the will of those who let themselves be used for it. Take from the rulers the possibility of carrying on war, and this monstrosity, this horror, will vanish from the world as the night vanishes before the sunlight; and rulers will then be *forced* to have their quarrels settled by arbitration. Then parents and widows will no longer lament the death of sons and husbands whom they lost on the battlefield; then we shall be spared the sight of cripples maimed in battles; then everybody will have enough to live on, and, with peace, general welfare will make men happy. War is the enemy of the welfare and the wealth of peoples; it is an ulcer on the body politic, robbing it of its vital forces; a scourge and plague-sore of humanity. War, with all its horrors, is a fury which mercilessly treads under foot all the demands



of reason and morality, of humanity and religion; that spreads misery and sorrow over lands and peoples; it is a remnant of the dark past, in which the bestial in man still had full sway, and a detestable abortion of the still unbridled passions of selfishness, lust of power, greed and revenge.

War is murder—only with this difference—that the petty murderer who is satisfied with killing *one* fellow-man is led to the scaffold, and loathed by every one, whilst the great murderer who depopulates and devastates whole countries is considered to be all the greater, the more victims have been sacrificed for him. Rulers know why they wage war; and the peoples have to make their contributions—the men with their blood, the women with their tears; and every one has to carry a grievous burden. But our life belongs to us, and to nobody else. Besides Him who has given us our life, no one has a right to take it, or to place us in danger of being deprived of it; nor has any one the right to compel us to kill our fellow-men, or to injure them in any way. If the nations, or that portion of them which is being used for the purpose of waging war, would say, “ *We refuse to take the lives of our fellow-men,*” all wars would at once be at an end, and from that time all questions at issue between the nations or their rulers would have to be settled in a peaceable way.

One shudders on reading that the pagan King of Burmah had a hundred and fifty relatives cut down; but when a Christian ruler leads thousands of the sons of his country to the shambles, it is considered to be quite in order, and those who were leaders are praised as heroes. Prof. Dr. Henne makes the following remarks in his work,



“The Written Revelation and the Spirit of Man” (1870): “Written Christianity, which was taught to the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia when they were boys, and which they swore to live up to, has not prevented these two crowned heads from ignoring before the entire world its principal commandment, and, indeed, from mocking it in the most outrageous manner, when, on the third of July, 1886, at Koenigsgratz, each of them ordered 200,000 of their innocent subjects—fellow Christians—who had never before set eyes on one another, to send a quantity of hot shot into each other’s brains, simply for the purpose of deciding the insignificant question, what new form the confederation of the German peoples was to have.” We abuse as savages and barbarians heathen Indians who, in order to defend their territory against Christian intruders, surprise and murder the latter. In how much are Christians better when they invade their neighbors’ country in order to seize it, destroying the lives of thousands, whilst the Indians on their war expeditions kill only a few?

It is justly called inhuman to abuse animals, and societies for their protection do their best to prevent it. It is justly called a brutality when fights between animals are arranged, when bull and dog mangle each other, and when gamecocks are provided with steel spurs, so as to be better able to cut their adversaries to pieces. Human feeling characterizes such acts as inhuman. Well, how fares it with philanthropy and humanity—not as directed toward animals, but toward human beings—when hundreds of thousands of them, who never saw each other before, and bore each other no ill-will, are let loose upon each other at the word of command, like wild beasts, in order

to murder and maim each other? Is that humane? No, it is *inhuman*; but it is not considered *unchristian*; for on the battlefield, covered with thousands of corpses and wounded, a *Te Deum* is then intoned, a "Lord God, we praise Thee!" A simple man who believes in God shudders at such blasphemy, at such mockery of everything sacred!

Christianity looks with pride upon that society which, under the sign of the Cross, devotes itself to the care of the wounded on battlefields. This is not, however, an offspring of Christianity, but of humanity rising superior to Christianity. They have a similar society in Turkey which has a crescent on its shield. These societies, however noble their aim may be, are, after all, only a compromise with the murder of war on a grand scale; and they even abet war, inasmuch as they make the picture of war appear in a milder light to those afar off, instead of its causing horror. True humanity does not consist in making war milder and more plausible, but in holding it up to mankind in all its atrociousness. Abolish war, which is the shame of our time and the disgrace of mankind, and you will not have to nurse the wounded, nor to collect charitable gifts for widows and orphans robbed of their supporters by war. Our civilization is and remains a lie so long as war between civilized peoples does not belong to the impossibilities. The only wars which have any justification are those of defense; because, just as individuals whose lives are threatened have the right and the duty to repel the attack, so nations have this right and this duty. But even defensive wars will not be either necessary or possible when *every* quarrel between nations or their rulers *must* be settled by arbitration. And it is to be

hoped that even *that* time will come when the rulers of the nations will have arrived at the conscious conviction that the peoples are not slaves, without any rights or will of their own, but that they possess uninvadable rights. When that time has come, it will no longer be necessary for the nations to fight for their liberty and rights—in other words, to revolutionize.

But—aside from the cruelty and inhumanity of the waging of war, and the blood which it costs—what other evils weighing heavily on mankind has war in its train? Primarily, demoralization. Every appeal to force entails brutalization and weakening of morality; and thus war also awakens the brutal instincts of man. It is an historical fact that immediately after wars brutality, license and crime increase. Naturally so; because the trade of war is a trade of brute force and murder, and must necessarily suffocate man's better tendencies and revive the bad ones. Look back upon the wars of all ages, and you will find that after every one of them, without exception, there was an increase of crime, of sexual crimes as well as of those against life and property.

And another bad consequence of every war is the damage to and destruction of property. The welfare of man is based upon the morality of his actions. Work is a trait of morality; and the more industrious a people is, the more moral it will be. Certainly, war also furnishes work to do; but this work is not the kind devoted to production, which brings forth welfare and wealth, but it is devoted to destruction, which annihilates wealth. War enriches the few, but impoverishes the masses; and just the poorer part of a population suffers most misery; for, whilst war brings nearly all business to a standstill, it

impairs every channel whence work or a livelihood is derived, and the prices of the necessities of life go up to extraordinary heights, often to double and triple their value in time of peace. Everywhere times are then bad; and, as in time of war no one wants to risk his means in new undertakings, one sees want of work everywhere; and hundreds of hungry families, thousands of laborers, who in time of peace earned their daily bread by the work of their hands, are now forced to idleness and plunged into poverty; and every day's work which, through military service, was lost to those laborers who are now in the field, and every piece of bread or meat eaten by the soldier who remains in unproductive activity, contributes to impoverish the country.

The welfare of the nations is being severely hurt in still another way by war; for every human life which is lost through war represents a certain amount of capital; and a million of men whose ages range from twenty to thirty years represent a very large sum. At the rate of one hundred dollars yearly wages for each man, this loss amounts to the enormous sum of three thousand million dollars in the course of twenty years! In this calculation only a small amount of wages—viz. : one hundred dollars—is taken for a basis, while three hundred dollars would certainly not be too much.

The time will come when—regard being had to our wars—people will marvel at the peculiar “morality” of our times. Some day, when the farmer's plow turns up a piece of iron out of the soil, he will tell his children, to their horror, that in the nineteenth century men murdered each other by thousands with such swords, not in anger or in revenge, but by order of some ruler who wanted war

to satisfy his greed of land or to crown his brow with the laurel of glory.

War destroys in a single day what decades of hard toil have honestly gained, and what other decades have then to regain, and leaves destruction, affliction, misery, blood and corpses, sorrow and tears, everywhere. Well, then, thou our country, if thou wilt show thyself worthy of the maturity of which thou vauntest thyself so often, prove it by deeds, and test thy words about civilization by resolving to abolish war; seal thy striving after the good by this the greatest step in advance possible to thee; and crown thy work, crown the abundance of good which thou hast already bestowed on the world, with this crown—the only one which in truth and in verity is “by the grace of God”—not for the weal of any one people, but for the weal of all mankind. Christianity has paid homage to war; exalted Humanity must give peace to the world by abolishing wars.

Peace is the supporter, war the destroyer.

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Protective duties are also enemies of liberty, and are in reality a war which nations carry on against each other in order to destroy each other's welfare. Free trade and free communication are necessary conditions for the peace and welfare of nations. The ethical principle of liberty stands above all private interest, and the empire of liberty, spiritual and social, is the empire of peace.

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Capital and labor are frequently considered as opponents and adversaries, as are also considered religion and science;

yet in neither instance is this assertion correct. Human society is an organization in which the interests of all its members are jointly and severally established, so connected with each other, so dependent the one upon the other, that no part can be healthy and thriving without the vigorous condition of the other. Arguing upon the erroneous idea that capital and labor are adversaries, the leaders of the laboring classes maintain that the power of capital ought to be destroyed. They say that capital is an enemy of labor, and that proprietors are the enemies of non-proprietors, which really means that, in order to procure a better position for laborers, capital should be destroyed and a war carried on against property. This is the germ of all the bitter feeling on the part of laborers against their employers.

But capital is not an enemy of labor, and, indeed, the idea of antagonism between these two is altogether out of the question; for capital is not only money, but it consists of three different factors—first, intelligence and mind, which are able to make plans and to conduct business and enterprises; secondly, the means to carry on business and enterprises; thirdly, the labor which is required to execute the enterprises. The most admirable mental faculties and the most precious and excellent ideas are of no use to him who lacks the capital to carry his ideas into execution: they are then useless and without value. And the rich man who is wanting in intellect will not be able, with all his money, to start an undertaking and to employ labor; and, however capable the workman may be, if he is in want of either intelligence or money, he will not be able to make use of his strength. Thus it is clear that these three factors can produce something only when they are

united with each other in peace, and work, not one against the other, but for and with each other; for peace brings wealth, while enmity destroys it.

But the workmen do not agree to this. On the contrary, the majority of them think that their interests are better advanced by continual warfare against their employers. It is principally by means of strikes that the laborer carries on this warfare; and it is not always the question of wages which causes the suspension of labor. Sometimes a change of the day of payment is demanded; or an obnoxious superintendent or foreman is to be removed, for no other cause than that he has at heart the interest of his employer, or has had a quarrel with one of the workmen; or they demand that workmen who have been dismissed for good cause should be reinstated; or that no apprentices shall be employed, etc. In this manner the laborers want to force the employer to actions over which they (the laborers) have no rightful control; and, in fact, nothing more is wanted than that they may appoint a committee, which shall conduct the business, watch over the employer, and pay him a certain salary, with which he ought to be content.

Many of the present employers have been laborers themselves, and have been successful in rising to a superior position. And what would be the course of action of a workman who to-day wants to dictate to his employer, and who after ten years has worked himself up to be an employer himself, if his workmen should presume to dictate to him? He would certainly think: "It is quite a different thing now."

The laborer has certain privileges; and if he contents himself with these, he will always be in the right. He



has the privilege of receiving his wages on an appointed day of the week or the month; he has the right to demand that nothing be asked of him that goes beyond his strength and ability; he has the right to demand kind, respectful and polite treatment, such as is due from man to man. *All this is the laborer's undisputed right.* But he has *no* right to dictate to his employer whom he should employ, or in what manner he should conduct his business. And if the workmen wish to enforce these rights by strikes or other means, they commit a twofold wrong; and those employers who yield to such unreasonable demands are ignorant of the wrong which they do to themselves and to those workmen who have not joined in the strike.

Nobody will doubt the fact that among the many employers there are some who are inclined to be unjust to their workmen, and to treat them in an unbecoming manner. But, fortunately, these are only exceptions. Every sensible man knows that, even if his heart does not tell him, it is to his own advantage that he should be on a good footing with his workmen, and that he should avoid everything that would be likely to disturb the good feeling between them. But the workingman should not embitter the life of his employer, which is often a very hard one. Does the workman know of all the cares and worry which trouble the mind of his employer? Has he an idea what trouble is caused by vile competition? Has he an idea of the anxiety and loss caused by a contract which has been made under favorable circumstances, and which is suddenly changed from a profitable business into a ruinous one by an unforeseen rise in the cost of the raw material? Has he any idea of the trouble and the actual loss which are experienced by the employer who is compelled to give

credit? Has he any idea of the vexation which a man of business experiences who is in want of capital, and what sacrifices he must make in order to get the money to pay the wages of those in his employ? If many a workingman who to-day thinks his employer a fortunate man, and envies his presumed prosperity, were only put for a few weeks in his employer's place, he would be glad to be a common workingman again, and receive his earnings without any trouble on pay-day.

But the laborers do not usually take this into consideration; and the demagogues to whom they lend a willing ear, who are not workingmen themselves, but live upon the labor of others, take good care to keep such considerations from their view. Labor is an honorable gift, and should not be degraded by the desire to work as little as possible, to earn in the shortest time the highest possible wages for the worst possible labor, in order to lead a comfortable life without trouble or exertion.

Have the strikes which have taken place for a higher rate of wages really done any good to the workingman? In a few isolated instances they have achieved their purpose for a short time; but, as a rule, they have caused mischief rather than advantages. A few years ago the coal-miners in South Yorkshire, England, lost \$1,250,000 by a strike of fourteen weeks; the coal-miners in South Wales lost, in the spring of 1875, £3,000,000 sterling, or \$15,000,000; and the men employed in the glassworks of the city of Pittsburgh lost half a million of dollars in wages during their strike in 1883. It would be almost impossible to estimate the sums which have been lost in strikes in different countries during the last ten years. It is an old experience in war that the conquered pay the costs of the

war. And, in most cases, the laborers have been the losers.

In certain countries there exist so-called strike-funds, for the purpose of assisting strikers. But is it honorable, if one is able to earn one's living by honest labor, to receive charity? And who supplies the funds which are in the hands of these strike-committees, which in many cases amount to considerable sums? Seven English trade unions have paid to strikers more than \$10,000,000 during the last six years; and the Trade Union of English Engineers and Mechanics paid, in the year 1879, \$750,000, and, in five years, \$1,935,000 for the same purpose. These strike-funds consist of nothing else but the savings of the working-people, which is the very best proof that the wages could not have been so bad as to force the laborers to violent means, for a strike is a violent measure.

The origin of strikes is, in the first place, the idea that the workingmen assume that high wages constitute prosperity. But that is a mistake; for high wages cause also an increase in the cost of daily necessities; and it is proved by experience that the laborer is better off with smaller wages and cheap provisions than under the circumstances prevailing in the first case; and with a little careful living, and by avoiding unnecessary expenses for pleasures and drink, any workingman might in, say, ten years save a sum which would enable him to establish a little home of his own. Many laborers who have earnestly tried *have succeeded* in this; and it should be the aim of every respectable workingman to reach this end. It can be done, and without strikes.

The second cause of strikes is the continual revolutionary movements of the demagogues. Yet, if there are

many among the laborers who are inclined to believe the doctrines of these leaders, and to follow them blindly, and who are ready every day to join a strike, there are many intelligent men among them who are only led astray and forced to join a strike. But is it right and manly for the laborer to allow himself to be forced into a movement which he considers unlawful and unjust; to do something which, if it were done to himself, he would thoroughly condemn; to do something which would injure his family, by depriving it of the income which is due to it, and which it would have received if the head of the family had been at work? If there is anywhere an undisputed right, it is *the right to work*—that is to say, the privilege of every individual to profit by his ability to work in any way he chooses. But, in the same way, every man has the right not to work if *he* does not *want* to work, or if he can live without work; *yet nobody*—neither a single man nor an association—*has the right to prevent another who wishes to work from doing so*. The *right to work* is violated by the strikers in the most ruthless manner. They claim the privilege of forcing those who wish to work to be idle. How is it possible that men whose duty it is to care for their families, and who are willing to work for them, are such cowards as to allow themselves to be tyrannized over by such as do not wish to work, but would rather live on the funds of the strike-committee? Workmen, you who are *willing* to work, *do not allow yourselves to be coerced by others*, and the strikes and all the foolish talk about the antagonism of capital and labor will soon cease. There is no antagonism between capital and labor; there can be none; and he who excites the workingmen against their employers is an enemy of law, justice, and liberty. With

few exceptions, wealth is the result of industry, economy, and carefulness in business; and what the wealthy who formerly were laborers—and there are thousands of men of this kind in the United States—have reached, can also be reached by others who are not at present in prosperous circumstances. Not the erroneous doctrines of socialism and communism, which wish to do away with personal property and level everything, and which excite the workmen against their employers, can make mankind happy; but those conditions in which men work peacefully with each other, and in which every one has a chance to rise as far as his industry, knowledge and abilities permit him, can secure for us a comfortable and peaceful life.

As a matter of course, no reasonable person will be opposed to union among the working-classes. There are many societies among them which have at heart the welfare of the laborers, and have done much good. There is, for instance, the American National Union of Stationary Engineers, which met in 1883 in Chicago. The purpose of this union is to improve the condition of the workingmen and their trade; it is strenuously opposed to everything relating to trade unions, and the society strictly forbids its members from taking part in any strike-movement. Such societies ought to be founded everywhere. They would soon gain the upper hand over strikers and strikes, and would really advance the welfare of the workingpeople and their families. Such societies as have been established by the great friend of workingmen, Schultze-Delitsch, have already done a great deal of good work, and procured homes for thousands of workingmen.

Do not let us forget that we are all workingmen in one way or another; that we all live from our labor, one under

more favorable conditions than the other; that we all depend upon each other; and that we have not only rights, but also duties to fulfill. But if the workingman insists alone upon his rights, and recognizes only his leaders as judges, who tell him that he has no duties, but rights only, and whose decisions smother every feeling of duty within him, we cannot wonder that the employer loses all courage and inclination to meet his workmen in a friendly way, or to arrange differences of opinion in a friendly manner. But is it right, justifiable, and reasonable, that, if we wish to obtain something from another person, we should use violent means, at once threaten with a strike, and place ourselves as an enemy to the other party? According to human nature, such violent means will result in a refusal of the demand, which would not have taken place if it had been made in a friendly and reasonable manner. The employers, according to the old proverb, "The pitcher goes to the well until it breaks," will be compelled, finally, to join in a great and general union to fight against these continual strikes. And which of the two could hold out the longest, the employers or the workmen?

As late as November, 1883, a strike of the cigarmakers in Montreal, which had lasted six months, had to be abandoned. The same was the case with a strike of the cigar-boxmakers in New York, which had also lasted for a long time, and regarding which the statement had daily appeared in the newspapers that the strikers would under no circumstances surrender. It may easily be imagined that the amount of wages which these two unions alone lost by their strikes must have been very great.



Nor should the workmen forget that a necessary consequence of strikes must be a disturbance of *all* business. In the beginning the employers will suffer most, but finally the workmen will have to endure the consequences of their actions. They should also consider that there are crises in business which *compel* the employer to take his choice between an entire suspension of the work or a reduction of the wages of the workingmen; for instance, the manufacturers of iron and steel had such an alternative before them in the fall of 1883, in consequence of the protective tariff. Many manufacturers have been compelled, instead of closing their factories altogether—which would have been to their interest—to offer work on half-time, or they have been obliged to reduce wages temporarily, rather than leave their workmen without work, and, consequently, without the means of existence. Is a reduction under such circumstances not better than an entire suspension of work? It cannot be of so much consequence to the single workman if he has to work for a short time at a reduction of ten per cent.; but to the employer who gives work to several hundred workmen, and with whom it is a question of thousands of dollars every week, the crisis, which means existence or ruin, becomes far more serious. All these arguments, which are never mentioned by those who have made themselves the leaders of the working-classes, should not be ignored by right-minded workingmen.

Let us hope that the time is not far distant when workingmen will recognize the fact that all strikes, no matter for what object, lead them backward rather than forward; and that, in a strike for an increase of wages, even if they are supported by the strike-fund, they are losers; for they



would have earned more if they had worked. Workmen should also learn to ignore the commands of unprincipled, incapable, and malicious leaders ; that it is the *most abject slavery* to allow anybody—either a society or an individual—to dictate to them whether they should work or not, whether they should support their families honestly or be idle. The upright man, who is willing to work, is actually cheated, if he is weak enough to follow the teachings of these demagogues. He loses *his* right to work, and the right to support himself and his family respectably.

The welfare of mankind is not furthered, but undermined by the distinction of classes. We all have the same right to happiness and well-being. The happiness of the individual depends upon the happiness of all ; and, on the same principle, it is the duty of the individual to contribute his share to the general welfare. The happiness of the individual, like that of nations, depends on peace ; for peace brings happiness, while discord destroys it. .

## CONCLUSION.

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Six hundred years before Jesus, Buddha, a priest of humanity, preached the doctrine that on earth, as well as in the life hereafter, *humanity* alone could be of avail. A hundred years ago Wilberforce wrote his work, "A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christianity, Contrasted with Real Christianity." A hundred years have elapsed since Thomas Paine published his "Age of Reason." A hundred years have passed by since Lessing preached his gospel of humanity. If things have not since changed *much* for the better; if these writings by Wilberforce, Paine and Lessing, did not exercise in those days that influence which they would if published to-day, we must find the reason in the fact that in those days Christian people were too firmly bound in the fetters of dogmatism to understand immediately and completely the opinions of these great men. But, in the course of this century, and particularly in the second half, things have changed for the better; everywhere we find a movement to break down those barriers which hitherto have divided mankind, and to bring about a better, more beautiful, and happier epoch. Hundreds of thousands of men have recognized the fact that Christianity separates man from man, and has put obstacles in his way which lead to strife, hatred, and cruel persecution; whilst humanity unites men as brethren, removing with gentle violence all impediments which separate man from man.

Ecclesiastic dogmatism, which has been derived from the Bible, but has little or nothing to do with true religion,

is the immediate cause of this separation. As soon as mankind can get rid of these dividing dogmas, it *must* acknowledge that all phases of faith *are based upon the belief in one Supreme Being*, and that all dissension and hatred, and, we may say, the mutual contempt existing among the different creeds, must cease, or be made innocuous, by the belief in that first and supreme principle of religious thought. There is nothing that separates the different creeds—regarded from a *humane* point of view—which justifies a division. The Catholic is not a criminal, whose presence should be shunned by the Protestant or Israelite; the Protestant is not unclean, so that Catholics or Israelites should fear intercourse with him; and the Israelite, who, to the shame of our century, is persecuted even in these days in Europe, has nothing in him which could bring danger to the followers of other creeds. Only dogmatism, hatred and fanaticism, nurtured by Christian priests, separate mankind, which otherwise would live in the bonds of brotherly love. The state of the world, with its everlasting wars and constantly increasing crime, has proved that Christianity has done nothing to improve mankind and to make the world better and happier; and it is, therefore, our duty to leave for posterity a superior and more blissful view of God and the world, and thus bring about a period of greater happiness. Man can never be without fault; but he can and must be made better as soon as the idea of brotherhood ceases to be a hollow sound, and begins to take an active part in the life of mankind.

Humanity is that which is common to all men, and within it rests the reconciling element to heal all contention. As soon as the adherents of all creeds will learn to recognize that they must not believe blindly what is

taught by the priests, but should use their own reason and reflect, they must come to the conclusion that if they rid themselves of erroneous dogmas and beliefs, and *cling only to the faith in one Supreme Being, and in the universal brotherhood* proceeding from it, all dissension and strife will cease, and peace with ourselves and with the world will be the blissful result.

God has not created Christians and Jews, and Catholics and Protestants, but only *men*; and he does not desire that we be Christians, or followers of any other sect, but that we be *men* and act as such.

To act humanly means to love our fellow-men and to do right. That is all God asks of us, and by obeying this injunction we attain true happiness.

God does not demand that we should believe in unnatural or supernatural things; that we should renounce all joys of this life, these heavenly blossoms which He has scattered in the pathways of our lives; He does not desire hypocrisy and casting down of eyes; but He wants us to believe simply in His fatherly love. He loves a cheerful looking up to him. We should not consider life a burden, but a gift; and we should lead a contented, cheerful and happy existence. God has not made us perfect: He has not made us angels; but He has made us to be men; and if we gain this end, and live as men in the true sense of the word, if all our doings are governed by humanity, we do our duty. To act with humanity means to be charitable, kind and just toward our fellow-creatures. If we wish to designate a detestable action, we call it *inhuman*. History has taught us that Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans, have often acted in a very inhuman manner. It is the task of true religion to relieve mankind from all that is

inhuman—from injustice, from heartlessness, from war, and from all that is evil, and to bring about a more sublime and blissful spiritual life.

When mankind renounces the so-called revealed religions and turns toward a belief in *one Supreme Being*, national hatred will cease with denominational hatred. Hatred between nations, united to that of religious belief, has brought about many bloody wars, and has cost the lives of millions of people, when it has been held out falsely as a bait, under the disguise of patriotism, to entice the nations to war.

But we must not only destroy what is not good: we must also build again; yet the rubbish of centuries must first be cleared away before we can lay the foundation of the new edifice. The love of God, which man has almost lost, must be reawakened, so that we can recover those holy and eternal aspirations which we have lost, because we could not recognize them in the corrupted shell of Church dogmatism. We must restore that one commandment: "Thou shalt love God, and thy neighbor as thyself"—the only commandment of true religion. Only by this sign—not by that of the cross, which for centuries has brought misery and wretchedness, hatred and dissensions, blood and destruction, and horrors of all kinds upon the world—only by this sign, the sign of the *one Eternal Being*, mankind will conquer—that is to say, will become more humane day by day.

As long as Christianity, with its false teachings of miracles, superstition and spiritual pride, is not overcome, atheism will be able to exterminate brotherly love in the heart of man, and to drive the world into a cold selfishness destructive of all noble feeling. When these two

adversaries of human freedom and human happiness, which at the outset are enemies, but eventually unite in destroying the belief in *one Supreme Being* and in brotherly love, shall have been conquered, then love will take the place of egotism, and liberty the place of slavery, and humanity will become victorious. However much we may torment ourselves to solve the problem of our existence, we shall find no other answer than this—that it is man's highest and only task *to be a man*. Not in the so-called religion of Positivism; not in the belief in old doctrines and antiquated dogmas; not in the belief in redemption by bloody sacrifices or outward powers, should we look for salvation; only in true and unfettered humanity, in the observation of the simple and sublime commandment: "Love ye one another like brethren"—only in this sense, not in that which is taught by the Christian Church, and which is applicable only to Christianity, the promise of one shepherd and one fold can become a reality.

The day will come when Light will from the Form  
Eternal rend the veil of mist and storm.  
Then shall it show, throughout the flight of time,  
In beauty unapproached, a brow sublime.  
Then Error, Craft and Dogma shall decay:  
All things that mar man's peace will fade away;  
And one great band of love will girdle round  
The living world, throughout which will resound  
Rapt Hallelujahs.

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I cannot conclude this work without saying one word to the mothers, to you who are the educators of the present generation, and thereby of those which are to come. The future of the world is in your hands, and that which you

teach is the seed of the future ; it is your sacred duty to see that this seed shall bring forth good fruit.

Teach your children, from their earliest age, that God and the love of God are the principles of all life, and that all religion is contained in the words: "Thou shalt love God, and thy neighbor as thyself." Teach them that there are no other Gods than the one Supreme Being. Teach them that all men—without distinction of color, nationality or creed—have equal rights, and that the only distinction between man and man lies between honest and dishonest men, between good and bad men. Teach them that man must have a higher aim than only to eat, to drink, and to sleep. Teach them that the love of truth and of doing right is the foundation of true happiness. See that your children do not confound Christianity with Religion, Christianity being a certain creed only. Guard them against dogmatism ; for, in later years, when they begin to think for themselves, they will throw away dogmatism ; and if the belief in God's love is not firmly rooted in their hearts, they will reject Religion—the belief in one Supreme Being—at the same time, and will thus be left without a hope or support. Save them from perplexing spiritual struggles, which have embittered the lives of so many people. It is in your power to plant the germs of goodness in your children's hearts, and to weed out that which is hurtful. Teach them to distinguish truth from falsehood, to love the former and to hate the latter. Teach them so that when they have grown up to be men and women they will be a blessing to mankind.

Thirty years ago, when I placed my eldest daughter's hand in that of her betrothed for life, I said to the young couple : " Become better than your parents." That



language sounded strange; and yet these words contain the basis of the salvation of the world. If children become better than their parents, if every generation improves upon that which precedes it, then the world must become better. It is our most sacred task to work so as to bring this about.

The most important part of this most sacred mission belongs to you, the mothers, who are the educators of the generation now growing up. In your hands rests the welfare of future times. You must do your duty.

24

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